

Fears of anti-German campaign on streets of Beirut

More kidnaps but mystery still on Waite

From Jean Carlos Gurnacio, Beirut

There was confusion last night about the whereabouts of Mr Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy who is in Lebanon on another mission to secure the release of Western hostages.

Mr Waite disappeared on Tuesday night to contact Lebanese kidnappers holding some of the hostages and has not been seen since. Early yesterday there were conflicting reports about his whereabouts.

But reports about the double abduction were contradictory. By nightfall, there was no claim for the kidnapping of the two men.

Druze militiamen in charge of Mr Waite's security since

his arrival almost two weeks ago have indicated that he is well.

Sir John Gray, the British Ambassador to Lebanon, met Lebanese Foreign Ministry officials yesterday, but he said that Mr Waite's mission was not discussed. "I am obviously following with interest

Church of England circles in Lebanon said yesterday they were not yet becoming anxious about Mr Waite's safety. There had been contact with Druze sources in Lebanon indicating that all was well. At Lambeth Palace, no news was being interpreted as good news.

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Mr Waite's mission... But you know Mr Waite's methods are very personal, very individual and he does not tell me where he is going and he does not tell me when he's coming back," he said.

The curiosity of many residents in west Beirut was centred rather on the latest abductions. Witnesses said the two men were intercepted by four gunmen near a newsstand and were taken away in a dark car in a matter of seconds. One witness said the men had fair hair and another, that the men's appearance left no doubt that they were foreigners.

Some militiamen in the neighbourhood went as far as to say that, both men were initially West Germans, but that claim was doubtful. Since the kidnapping of two West Ger-

mans, Dr Rudolf Cordes and Herr Alfred Schmidt, in the past six days, most West German citizens in west Beirut have left.

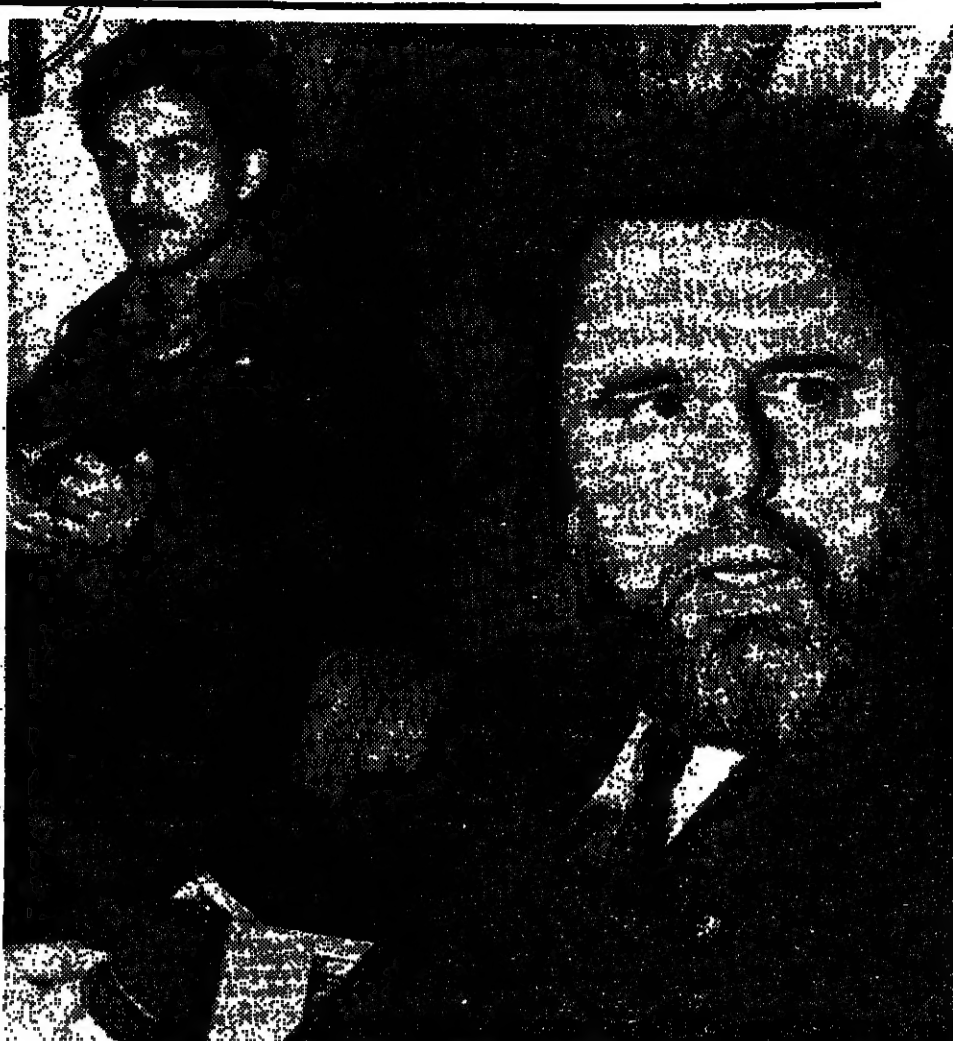
Yesterday Lebanese police escorted 11 West Germans across the Green line into Christian east Beirut and authorities said that the evacuation of West Germans had been completed, except for a reduced number of diplomats and security men who remain in the heavily guarded West German Embassy in Ras Beirut.

Herr Antonius Eitel, the West German Ambassador, was perhaps the only West German to venture into the streets. He did it under a formidable protection and only to go to Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, the respected Shia Muslim scholar regarded as the spiritual leader of the Hezbollah, or Party of God.

The Ambassador said that given "the important role which his excellency plays within the Shia community," he had asked the Sheikh to do "whatever he can" to win the release of Dr Cordes and Herr Schmidt.

The relations between Bonn and the Shia community in Lebanon came into conflict after Frankfurt police arrested Muhammad Ali Hamadi, a 22-year-old man sought by US police in connection with the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jet to Beirut. A US Navy diver was shot dead in the hijacking.

The Americans have requested his extradition and West Germany, but that claim was doubtful. Since the kidnapping of two West Ger-



Mr Terry Waite under guard by a Druze militiaman. The Druze are now responsible for his security as he seeks to secure the freedom of European and American hostages.

Palace sues 'Sun' over royal letter

By Alan Hamilton

Buckingham Palace last night took the rare step of instituting legal proceedings against *The Sun* newspaper after its publication yesterday of a personal letter from the Duke of Edinburgh to Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Michael Wilkins, Commandant-General of the Royal Marines.

Mr Michael Shea, the Queen's press secretary, said that the letter had been put in the hands of Farrer and Co., the Queen's solicitors, on the ground that publication of a private and confidential letter was a "blatant" breach of copyright. There was no comment on the move last night from News International, publishers of *The Sun*.

Although there is little likelihood that such an action by the Palace would ever proceed to the acute embarrassment of a court hearing, taking the preliminary steps towards legal action is an indication of the Duke of Edinburgh's fury.

Such a move is unusual from the Palace, which normally prefers to suffer in silence at press disclosures.

An internal inquiry to discover a "mole" within the Ministry of Defence is expected to follow yesterday's publication. The letter discusses the reasons for Prince Edward's recent decision to abandon his Marines' officer training course.

Whitehall anger over failure to ban satellite story

By Michael Evans and Martin Fletcher

There was anger and confusion in Whitehall yesterday when it was admitted that the revelations in the *New Statesman* spy satellite article only appeared because agents acting for the Treasury Solicitor could not find Mr Duncan Campbell on Wednesday night to serve him with an injunction.

Although the injunction did not specifically mention the name of the magazine, the wording was intended to prevent Mr Campbell from publishing any of the information which he had in his possession relating to the top secret Project Zircon, the Ministry of Defence research programme to build a spy satellite.

The injunction had to be served on Mr Campbell personally but this was not done until Thursday, by which time the *New Statesman* was already on sale.

Yesterday Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, speaking on Independent Radio News, said that the public would be "disgusted" that the magazine had published plans for a British spy satellite, taken from a BBC television programme which had been banned on grounds of national security.

She said: "They don't expect people to behave that way. This has been published by a left-wing publication. I find that very significant."

It was claimed yesterday that Mrs Thatcher was furious with Mr George Younger, the Defence Secretary, for failing to stop the facts about the spy satellite from being published, and handed over responsibility for damage limitation to Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary.

But this was another example of the confusion which seemed to have gripped Whitehall yesterday. In fact the responsibility was given to Sir Geoffrey because it had been acknowledged in an affidavit to the High Court, for the injunction application, that the secret defence project involved GCHQ, the intelligence-gathering centre, which is part of the Foreign Office domain.

Once the contents of the affidavit, written by Sir Peter Marchant, the director of GCHQ, became public knowledge, Mrs Thatcher decided it was right for the Foreign Office to take charge.

Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General, was still considering yesterday whether to take legal action against Mr Campbell.

In the Commons, Mr John Biffen, the Leader of the House, announced that there would be a full debate next Tuesday arising out of the Speaker's decision on Thursday to ban the screening of the BBC film to MPs.

Telecom strike could cripple 500,000 phones

By Tim Jones

As Britain faced a potentially crippling telephone strike from midnight on Sunday, senior civil servants were preparing to tell the Government the system will deteriorate at the rate of 24,000 telephones a week.

The effect on business could become devastating because British Telecom faces a huge backlog of repairs after the severe weather. By early next week, up to 500,000 telephones could be out of action.

Breakdowns will be blamed mainly on the antiquated nature of much equipment.

The Government has prepared a secret contingency plan to maintain vital communications between the departments of state. It is understood that Government offices in London and the provinces are linked by a back-up system installed for such an emergency.

As members of the National Communications Union yesterday refused to give undertakings to work normally, Mr John Golding, the general secretary, said: "BT management's dog in a manger attitude is bringing the company to the edge of disaster. Their pig-headed determination to engage in a trial of strength is going to damage the company for years to come."

"It is obvious that they have entered a bunker in telecommunications headquarters and they are determined to stay there until the business is destroyed. The quicker common sense prevails and we get round the table, the better."

Mr Michel Bett, BT's head of inland communications, said: "Since the present dispute started, the company has

been doing all it can to minimize disruption to customers. That is why we have not been prepared to allow staff who have disrupted British Telecom's service by industrial action to return to work without an assurance that they would then work normally."

Although the dispute ostensibly concerns the rejection by the union of a backdated pay deal worth an estimated 7 per cent, it has developed to embrace long-standing ideological differences.

Yesterday dozens of BT's 6,500 local exchanges experienced mechanical difficulties.

At the Stock Exchange, which has 7,500 telephones, business was reported to be normal, although BT shares fell by 3p.

Mr Luke Glass, a Stock Exchange spokesman, said about a third of its telephones were now with Mercury Communications, BT's main rival. But Mr David Gibbons, of brokers James Capel, said that Mercury and the cellular radio companies were still reliant on BT.

Lloyds and Abbey National found yesterday that some east London branches were unable to connect with the head computer, while Morgan Guaranty, the London finance company, was reported to have been out of touch with New York for two nights.

Last night, union volunteers dealt with faults when the fire brigade switchboard at Forest Gate, east London, went out of action.

Among the worst hit was British Midland Airways, whose Liverpool Airport reservations number was out of action.

Jonathan Miller, page 16

Thatcher and Hurd support Anderton

By Ian Smith and Michael Evans

The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary publicly gave their support yesterday to Mr James Anderton, the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, who is under pressure from his police authority to resign after his controversial remarks about his divine mission to speak out against the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Aids).

Mrs Margaret Thatcher said she was "very glad that some people have spoken out" about the spread of Aids. "Some people have made their position very clear - thank goodness for that," she added.

Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, whose officials saw Mr Anderton and three representatives of the Manchester Police Authority on Thursday to try to mediate

in the row over his recent public statements, expressed his hope that the two sides could resolve their differences.

"I know James Anderton reasonably well and I have a high regard for him both as a chief constable and a man," he said. He predicted that Mr Anderton would still be chief constable in 12 months' time.

The boost for Mr Anderton came after two senior Home Office officials persuaded him during the talks on Thursday to have a full meeting with the chairman and deputy of the Labour-led police authority on Tuesday in London. There was general hope in Whitehall yesterday that the differences could be resolved then.

However members of the police authority did it clear

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Poll dismissed as a 'rogue result'

By Robin Oakley, Political Editor

A shock opinion poll by Gallup, showing Labour with a 35 per cent lead was being dismissed yesterday as a rogue result totally out of line with the trend confirmed in other recent polls.

The Gallup poll reported respective party support as Labour 39.5 per cent, Conservatives 34.5 per cent, Alliance 23.5 per cent and others 2.5 per cent.

Tory morale will be restored rapidly by news that an as yet unpublished MORI poll, taken between January 9 and 13 and involving 1,700 people in 163 constituencies - nearly twice the Gallup sample of 910 electors - gives the Conservatives a 5 per cent lead, with party support at Conservatives 42 per cent, Labour 37 per cent, Alliance 19 per cent and others 2 per cent.

The MORI result is in line with the 5 per cent lead recorded for the Tories in a Harris poll conducted on January 10 and 11 and also in an NOP poll conducted between January 7 and January 14. A Marplan poll conducted from January 9 to January 12 gave the Tories a two point lead.

Argyll buys Safeway

Argyll Group, the food company headed by Mr James Gulliver, is to pay £681 million for the Safeway supermarket chain in the biggest deal in British food retailing.

The takeover of the chain will double the size of Argyll, creating a group with sales of £2.8 billion and 9 per cent of the packaged grocery business.

Mr Gulliver - who lost the

takeover battle for Distillers to Guinness - has bounced back to become the fourth largest grocer behind Sainsbury, Tesco and Dees.

Argyll already runs the Presto supermarket chain. The deal was given a good reception in the City but some analysts were concerned that Mr Gulliver may have paid over the odds for Safeway.

Details, page 21

Warning as Blakelock jurors are followed

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Reporter

A jury at the Central Criminal Court trying six people accused of murdering PC Keith Blakelock during the disturbances in Tottenham, north London, was sent home early yesterday after two jurors complained of being followed and photographed.

On the third day of the trial Mr Justice Hodgson read out the text of a note he had received from the jury.

It said: "We are concerned that two of our number were pursued and photographed while leaving the building yesterday evening. Where do we stand legally? If such actions are permissible, how can we avoid any future similar occurrence? Can prints and negatives be recovered and publication suppressed?"

The judge told the jury the incident had been insufferable. "I can well understand that you are all feeling under considerable strain and pressure."

The judge pointed out that if the incident was repeated it might constitute a serious offence which could be dealt with as a contempt of court.

He told the jury there was not the slightest grounds, not even the remotest suspicion, that the photographing had anything whatsoever to do with the six on trial.

"Who it was we do not yet know, we may never know," he said. "But I have given permission for the police to speak to you and if you can give them any information I should be very grateful."

Van Gogh's flowers may make £10m

By Geraldine Norman, Sale Room Correspondent

Christie's are to sell "Sunflowers" a Van Gogh from the Chester Beatty collection, in London on March 30, it was announced yesterday.

It is expected to make more than any picture previously sold at auction. Christie's are talking of a price in excess of £10 million, the previous record being £8.1 million for a Mantegna.

Van Gogh painted seven pictures of sunflowers to decorate his studio at Arles in 1888, a few months before his death. They are among the most famous images of Western art and most are now in

view of shortage of funds, it would have been difficult to justify its purchase and we had to decline the offer."

The painting comes from the superb collection formed by Sir Alfred Chester Beatty and his wife Edith in the 1920s and 1930s. Beatty opened up the Zambian copper belt and made a vast fortune as a mining engineer. Impressionist paintings and oriental manuscripts were his special passion. He left his library to the Elre government.

Mr Neil Macgregor, director of the National Gallery in London, said yesterday: "We already have a particularly fine example of the subject so

were removed last week. They included a Degas pastel of a young woman, which is to be included in the March 30 auction, and two Cezannes. "The Stove in the Studio" and "A Path in Chantilly". One of the Cezannes is also to be sold.

The sale follows the death last year of Mrs Helen Beatty, daughter-in-law of Sir Alfred. Her daughter and two grandchildren, Mrs Sarah Thompson-Jones, Lord Brooke and Lady Charlotte Fraser, are the beneficiaries of her will. Mrs Thompson-Jones was formerly married to the Earl of Warwick.

Four of the Impressionist paintings have been on loan to the National Gallery since the death of his son in 1983. All

Photograph, page 3

Portfolio Gold

There is £12,000 to be won today in The Times Portfolio Gold competition - the weekly prize of £8,000 plus the daily £4,000.
The £4,000 prize was shared by two readers. Details, page 3.
Portfolio lists, pages 20 and 25.

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NEWS SUMMARY

Women escape damage by acid

Five women were treated with concentrated acid, while undergoing gynaecological examinations, because of a mistake in transferring stock records on to a hospital's computer, an inquiry disclosed yesterday.

The women, attending a clinic at the Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham last April, were treated with Glacial Acetic Acid, a corrosive laboratory substance never used in patient care, instead of a diluted acid solution - Acetic Acid, 5 per cent.

Doctors failed to realise they were using the wrong substance until the fifth patient cried out in pain. When the mistake was discovered all the women were recalled to the hospital, but none was found to have suffered permanent damage.

Blast at tower block

Residents who fled after a massive blast ripped through a tower block in Liverpool yesterday claimed that they reported a gas leak only days before the explosion.

Dozens of flats were wrecked in the blast at the 14-storey Wingate Towers, in Huyton, Merseyside.

The only person hurt was Mr John Wilson, aged 23, who lived on the eighth floor where the explosion is believed to have happened. He was seriously ill last night with burns.

A British Gas spokesman said: "We cannot yet confirm that gas is involved".

Threat at dockyard

Trade union leaders at Rosyth Dockyard yesterday gave warning of a strike if the Ministry of Defence handed control to private management.

Their threat came after Rear-Admiral John Burgess, managing director of the yard, said he expected Babcock-Thorn to sign a MoD contract "within days".

Mr Les Cowey, the trade unions' secretary, said: "We have a mandate to call a 24-hour strike".

Land for horses

Prime farmland should be used for "a massive extension of breeding and training of racehorses", a senior Conservative MP said last night.

Speaking in Newmarket, Sir Eldon Griffiths said that, given the right tax incentives, up to 50,000 acres of East Anglian farmland could be used.

As well as reducing EEC surpluses, that would provide more jobs and earn more foreign exchange, he said.

£42,000 damages

Miss Madeleine Turner (right), a former Wren whose "adventurous" sex life was ruined in a car crash, won £42,500 damages in the High Court in London yesterday.

She was knocked off her motorcycle by a car driven by Miss Susan Wilson, of Gosport, Hampshire, who admitted liability.

Miss Turner, aged 25, of Little Yeldham, Essex, was "devastated" when discharged from the Navy in 1981. She now had a temporary job.

Stab girl still critical

Catherine Humphrey, aged 10, who was stabbed near her home in Minster, Kent, last week, was still in a critical condition in hospital last night after being put back on a life-support machine.

After a slight worsening on Thursday, there was no change in her condition yesterday, the hospital said.

A man has been remanded in custody by magistrates in Ramsgate on charges of abduction and attempted murder.

Africa's future is as bleak as ever, Geldof says

By Paul Valley

A year after the echoes of the Live Aid concert have died away the future of the peasants of Africa, for which the pop world raised a record-breaking amount, is as bleak as it ever was. Bob Geldof said yesterday.

In a speech prepared to mark his acceptance of the prestigious Third World Prize from Mr Shridath Ramphal, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, and Mr Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania, in London yesterday, Mr Geldof was critical of the policies of Western and African governments alike.

He also criticized the operating methods of wealthy United Nations and World Bank agencies. Several had applied to Band Aid for money. "Even more surprising, we found that their projects did not meet our criteria."

"They were not cost effective; they spent too much on salaries and expenses of Northern consultants; they based their projects on plans

made in Europe rather than on the needs and abilities of Africa," he said.

The grim lessons of the 1984 Sahelian famine have not been learned, he said. "Too many African politicians, as well as Northern politicians, see African farmers, three-quarters of the continent's population, as politically and financially worthless."

"The only way they can gain the attention of their governments and the world is to go hungry and die in sufficiently

large numbers." The signs were that would have to happen again before anything was done.

Mr Geldof criticized Western governments for their refusal to waive the interest on the debts of the world's poorest nations. "Africa spent \$11 billion servicing its debts last year; the North offered no help... they feared that Latin America would ask for similar treatment." Instead they continued to manipulate world markets so that trade barriers and agricultural subsidies adversely affected the Africans.

African governments continued to invest heavily in cash crops which would provide them with the money to repay their debts. As a result, "Africa was the only region on the world in which government spending per farmer fell each year. Not since 1970 has Africa produced enough food to feed itself."

Yet African leaders, encouraged by Western development experts continued in their misconceived attempts to move the continent directly from subsistence farming to industrialization.

Their schemes were hare-brained, he said, and still only 4 per cent of aid was used to improve rain-fed agriculture which was Africa's natural staple method. Instead much aid money was used in "an extremely expensive way to stand perfectly still".

Mr Geldof said he had no illusions about the success of Band Aid. "What we and other agencies really accomplished was to make it impossible for our politicians to claim that citizens of wealthy nations do not care for Africa."

Home Office may appeal over 5p TV licence ruling

By Howard Foster

The Home Office is considering an appeal against a High Court ruling that a group of pensioners in Yorkshire should pay only 5p a year for their colour television licences because they share the services of a local housing steward.

While lawyers acting for the Labour-controlled Kirkcaldy Borough Council claimed that the decision opened the way for thousands of pensioners to claim the concession, Home Office officials emphasized that the potential revenue loss was not likely to be as catastrophic as it might seem.

A council representative said that the ruling by Mr Justice Taylor, that there was "no rational basis" for the Home Secretary's "perverse" decision to refuse the concession, meant that all retired pensioners living in council accommodation, so long as it was provided especially for the elderly and benefited from the services of a housing steward, would no longer have to pay £58 a year for a colour television licence.

Under the Wireless Telegraphy (Broadcast Licence Charges and Exemption) Regulations 1970, pensioners are entitled to cheap licences if they live in old people's homes, defined as housing provided specially for retired people of pensionable age which also has "accommodation or facilities for the common use of all the occupants".

Housing stewards have been employed to collect rents and offer housing advice at Kirkcaldy since 1983. Mr Anthony Porten, for the council, successfully argued that the housing steward who visited

three pensioners in Roman Close, Mount, Huddersfield, constituted a shared facility, as required by the regulations.

Last night, the Home Office said that the papers from the case would be studied before there was a decision on whether to appeal.

"We do not know how many people are visited by housing stewards in the country," the Home Office said. "In some places, pensioners take their rent to the local council offices and there is no need for a housing steward and hence, no grounds for claiming a shared facility."

Granada Television has become part of a consortium expected to take control of TFI, the main French television network. French government and media sources said yesterday (Jonathan Miller writes).

The Manchester-based independent television company already owns 11 per cent of Canal Plus, the French subscription television network.

According to the sources, Granada is expected to take a 5 per cent share in the consortium led by Hachette, the media group, which hopes to win 50 per cent of the shares of TFI when it is privatized this spring. The remainder are to be sold to small investors.

Hachette was yesterday said to be discussing taking a stake in the British Satellite Broadcasting, the direct broadcast service.

Both ventures would be subject to the approval of the Independent Broadcasting Authority.



Police arriving with a bolt-cutter after anti-nuclear protesters from a group called Snowball chained themselves up (right) outside the Ministry of Defence offices yesterday.

187 held after nuclear protest in Whitehall

By a Staff Reporter

A total of 187 anti-nuclear campaigners were arrested in London yesterday after attending a demonstration outside the Ministry of Defence headquarters in Whitehall.

Organized by a group called Snowball, the demonstrators had sought to blockade the building by lying down in front of gateways and chaining themselves up. They also tried to disrupt Ministry of Defence telephone lines by making non-stop calls.

Their objectives were not achieved because large numbers of police were on hand to carry the protesters away. Two people were released without charge, while the remaining 185 were bailed to appear in a number of inner London courts on February 10 and 11.

(Photographs: Tim Bishop)

Power struggle

INLA groups down not out

By Richard Ford

The feud between republican paramilitaries connected with the divided Irish National Liberation Army is threatening more killings on both sides of the border.

Security sources in the north believe that INLA still exists despite reports in the republic that it has disbanded and dumped weapons after years of internal squabbling.

Even if the name INLA is no longer used, the sources believe elements will re-emerge under another name.

Indeed in the past six weeks, a group calling itself the Irish People's Liberation Organization has killed one police officer and attempted to murder two more in Belfast. It is suspected that this group comprises disaffected members of INLA.

The killing of two Belfast men in a hotel near Drogheda, Co Louth, four days ago was

part of a struggle for control of the movement which has intensified since 24 INLA members were released from jail in Belfast a month ago.

Although the Lord Chief Justice quashed their convictions, he said it was probable that many of the men were in the organization.

Among those freed was a man described by the prosecution as a one-time officer commanding of the Belfast Brigade of INLA, and others who commanded units of the movement in strongly republican areas of Belfast.

Since the killings on Tuesday, figures from INLA and its political wing, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, have gone to ground, fearing retaliatory blood-letting.

Thomas Power, aged 32, and John O'Reilly, aged 26, will be buried today after being killed for failing to agree

with other factions which wanted the movement disbanded.

Death notices in a Belfast newspaper said both men had been "murdered by thugs".

Mrs Agnes O'Reilly, widow of the man widely believed to have been officer commanding INLA, claimed her husband and Mr Power had travelled to the hotel near Drogheda in an attempt to end the divisions.

"We know who did this, and we know that they had been set up. They wanted control so they killed them."

The new director of information at the Northern Ireland Office is to be Mr Andy Wood, aged 42. He succeeds Mr David Gilliland, who is retiring.

Mr Gilliland has served as a close adviser to every Secretary of State since Stormont was abolished in 1972.

MP hits at 'political policing'

By Nicholas Wood
Political Reporter

The Labour Party's plan to give local councillors power to supervise the police would transform local forces into the "uniformed apparatchiks of the Town Halls", a senior Conservative MP claimed yesterday.

Sir Eldon Griffiths, MP for Bury St Edmunds and parliamentary adviser to the Police Federation, denounced the proposal as opening the door to "political policing".

Labour's blueprint, first disclosed in *The Times* earlier this week, would lead to the disbanding of the Special Patrol Group, the emasculating of the Special Branch and restrict the carrying of weapons to uniformed officers, he said.

In Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, the police would lose the horses they need to contain crowd violence and the dogs for sniffing out explosives.

Elsewhere, left wing councillors would seize their new powers to "bullyrag" their chief constables.

Sir Eldon said that had such controls been available at Broadwater Farm, in Tottenham, north London, the scene of the 1985 riots, the loony left and its allies among the "black mafia" dominating wide areas of the estate would have decided whether the police "would have gone to the rescue of the vast majority of ordinary, decent citizens".

In the "South Yorkshire Soviet", Mr Arthur Scargill, the miners' leader, would have been able to impose his will on both the local community and Parliament, the MP said.

Groce officers could still face discipline

Scotland Yard yesterday delivered its report to the Police Complaints Authority on whether Insp Douglas Lovelock and two senior officers should face discipline charges over the Brixton police raid in which the inspector shot Mrs Cherry Groce.

It is thought that Insp Lovelock will not face further hearings after his acquittal last week of malicious wounding, but there is speculation that the other two officers, Supt Ian Becken and Supt John Murray, could face action.

The final decision rests with the complaints authority.

Steel in warning over farm loans

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

The Prime Minister's refusal to join the European Monetary System was costing Britain's farmers an estimated £240 million a year in interest charges, Mr David Steel, the Liberal Party leader, said last night.

The Tory policy of high interest rates was crippling industries like farming which needed high investment levels, he told the West Berwick branch of the National Farmers' Union. Farm borrowing was at a record level of £6,000 million, yet Britain had "scandalously" high interest rates compared with 4 per cent in West Germany and 4½ per cent in Japan.

Since 1984 the industry's future planning had been hampered by continuing political vacillation. It was clear that burgeoning surpluses could no longer be afforded; the choice now lay between reducing the common agricultural policy budget, leading inexorably to a bankrupt industry and ravaged country-

side, or a restructured price support system. A report in this week's *Farmers Weekly* claims that banks are asset-stripping dairy farms which have been forced into receivership.

Two farmers in Dyfed told the magazine that Barclays were planning to cash in the milk quota values of their farms rather than trying to sell the properties as a whole. In the past two years, while farmland values have plummeted, a thriving market had developed in the transfer of quotas.

One farmer said his 200-acre unit would sell for about £400,000, but that the quota alone could realize some £300,000.

Mr Alan Bellis, secretary of the Carmarthen branch of the National Farmers Union, said he knew of many cases where producers had sold all or part of their quota under pressure from banks and auctioneers, but he had no hard evidence of receivers selling quotas.

Almost four years to the day since the inquiry began, the Department of Energy will issue a 3,000-page document and a 150-page summary of the findings of Sir Frank Layfield, QC, the inspector, and his three expert advisers.

Mr Peter Walker, Secretary of State for Energy, is seeking parliamentary time for a debate. Then he will make his decision.

The inquiry examined a proposal and objections for plans by the Central Electricity Generating Board to build a PWR next to its existing first-generation Magnox atomic power station.

Submission of evidence ended long before the accident at Chernobyl and under the terms of the inquiry the inspector could not legally take account of that accident.

The examination has become the longest running and, at about £25 million, the most expensive investigation of its kind in Britain.

Suicide by ex-GCHQ colonel

A former army officer who became a Civil Servant at the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) was driven to suicide by the boredom of retirement, an inquest in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, was told yesterday.

Lieutenant Colonel Ronald Williams, aged 65, a Russian language expert, gassed himself to death on car exhaust fumes four months after leaving the GCHQ listening post in Cheltenham, the inquest was told.

"He did not have enough to occupy himself and became very depressed," Mrs Ann Williams, his widow, said in a statement. "He played the occasional round of golf but had no other outside interests."

Colonel Williams, the holder of the Military Cross, was found dead in the garage of his home at the Loftings, Churnhill, near North Cerney, Gloucestershire, on December 31.

His wife found a note in the hallway of their home. It read: "I will be in the garage. All my love. Goodbye, Ronald."

In her statement, which was read to the inquest, Mrs Williams said her husband took a regular army commission in 1945 after war service.

The inquest recorded a verdict of suicide.

Sizewell inquiry report runs to 3,000 pages

The report of the public inquiry into plans to build the controversial American-type pressurized water reactor (PWR) nuclear power station, to be called Sizewell B, on the Suffolk coast, will be published on Monday (Our Science Editor writes).

Almost four years to the day since the inquiry began, the Department of Energy will issue a 3,000-page document and a 150-page summary of the findings of Sir Frank Layfield, QC, the inspector, and his three expert advisers.

Mr Peter Walker, Secretary of State for Energy, is seeking parliamentary time for a debate. Then he will make his decision.

The inquiry examined a proposal and objections for plans by the Central Electricity Generating Board to build a PWR next to its existing first-generation Magnox atomic power station.

Submission of evidence ended long before the accident at Chernobyl and under the terms of the inquiry the inspector could not legally take account of that accident.

The examination has become the longest running and, at about £25 million, the most expensive investigation of its kind in Britain.

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Schools too readily write off pupils as dull says Baker

By John Clare, Education Correspondent

Mr Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science, accused schools yesterday of being "far too ready to write off children as dull or slow or difficult" and then proving the point by offering them too little.

In a wide-ranging attack on the education system, Mr Baker said only the more able school-leavers were being offered qualifications that were valued by employers and society.

He described the curriculum as being "aimed disproportionately at those capable of readily communicating

facts and coping with theory". He added: "For too many children it seems that our system sets out to discover what they cannot do and then tests them and fails them on that basis".

He also criticized the teaching of individual subjects. He said raising standards in English was "one of the biggest tasks", radical changes were needed in mathematics, many science courses were out of date and much history teaching was "unbalanced".

Mr Baker was addressing the annual conference in London of the Society of

Education Officers. He told his audience that they would "do a disservice to the cause of education and to the nation" if they entrenched themselves in a defence of the status quo.

In a surprising departure from current right-wing thinking, Mr Baker also rejected the idea of dividing pupils into different streams.

He said: "I see no virtue in dividing pupils into the academic and non-academic, let alone in trying to construct an academic curriculum for some, a technical curriculum for others, and for yet others a vocational curriculum".

Instead, he said, the Government's aim was that all pupils should study a core curriculum of "not less than five" subjects, including English, mathematics, science and history.

Its "long-term" objective was to raise the achievement of 80 to 90 per cent of all school-leavers "up to and above" the level now attained by the average, which is CSE grade four.

"We should now move quickly to a school curriculum governed by national criteria."

Ten head and deputy head teachers from Surrey are going back to school to sharpen up on school management techniques and financial planning (Mark Dowd writes).

During the next 18 months, the team of senior staff, selected by Surrey County Council from 50 applicants, will spend more than 300 hours with tutors from the International Management Centre from Buckingham, an independent business school.

Mrs Anne Stokes, a deputy head at Bishop Wand Secondary School in Sunbury-on-Thames, said yesterday at the formal launch of the programme that there were many areas in which senior staff can learn from the marketing strategies.

Lecturers protest at new pay offer

By Our Education Correspondent

The Government announced yesterday that it was offering an extra £167 million over the next three years for university lecturers' pay.

Mr Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science, described it as a "very substantial" sum and said he hoped it would "do a lot to stop the brain drain getting any greater".

But the Association of University Teachers, which has threatened to refuse to mark this year's final examinations, said it was "bitterly disappointed".

It also contested Mr Baker's figures, arguing that the true sum was £71 million over three years, equivalent to an extra 10 per cent on the pay bill.

The association is demanding 24 per cent over two years.

Mr Baker said there was to be an extra £40 million in 1987-88; £56 million in 1988-89; and £71 million in 1989-90. The association objects that the last two figures merely double count the £40 million for the first year.

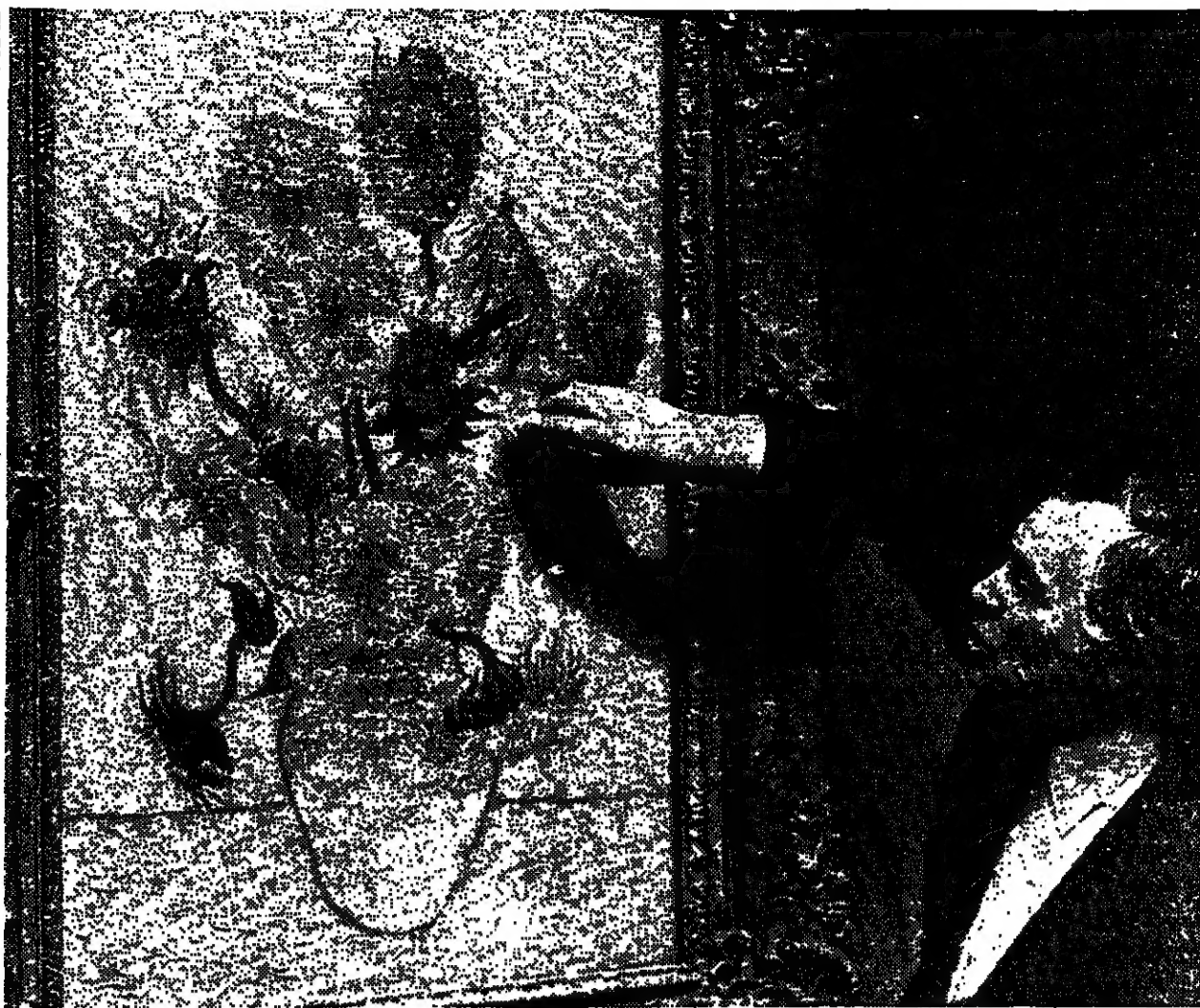
Miss Diana Warwick, general secretary of the association, said: "Mr Baker has effectively dumped the responsibility for sorting out the universities on the vice-chancellors and us. It is very difficult to be optimistic."

Teachers held out the prospect yesterday of a campaign of passive resistance in schools in England and Wales if, as they privately expect, the House of Lords passes the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Bill which peers will be debating next week.

The resistance will be directed at the 19-point contract which spells out teachers' professional obligations.

Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said that "trouble" was inevitable and would "not necessarily" consist of strikes.

Mr Nigel de Gruchy, deputy general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said his 128,000 members would be advised to "do the minimum".



"Sunflowers", the Van Gogh painting which auctioneers expect to fetch in excess of £10 million when it goes on sale in March, being examined by Mr Peter Rose of Christie's (Photograph: Tim Bishop).

Tube star is suspended for swearing

Mr Jools Holland, presenter of Channel 4's *The Tube* rock show, was suspended for six weeks yesterday by Tyne Tees Television for swearing on children's TV last week.

He was first suspended on Friday of last week for using a four-letter word during a networked trailer for the programme broadcast at tea time.

Mr Holland, aged 29, has since apologized in writing and Tyne Tees said it had taken that, and his loyal service, into account when reaching its decision.

Questions on brain death

By Jill Sherman

Two Cambridge doctors opposed to existing criteria for diagnosing brain stem death, were questioned yesterday by Sir Raymond Hoffenberg, chairman of the Conference of Royal Colleges, who is leading an inquiry into the shortage of organs for transplants.

Dr David Wainwright Evans, a cardiologist at Papworth Hospital, and Dr David Hill, an anaesthetist at Addenbrooke's Hospital, were among a number of specialists giving evidence to Sir Raymond whose working party was in session at the Royal College of Physicians.

He hopes to report to the

Government this summer with recommendations on how the problem, which has resulted in thousands of people waiting for heart, liver and kidney transplants, can be overcome.

One of the working party's main concerns is why some doctors are reluctant to ask relatives about patients clearly in no fit state to be consulted about their own wishes, and why relatives are reluctant to give consent for the organs to be removed.

Sir Raymond has claimed that recent publicity about the Cambridge doctors' opposition to the current criteria for

establishing brain death has led to a number of people withdrawing their donor cards.

"We are trying to find more about what the problems might be in providing an adequate number of organs for transplantation. One of them is the possibility that the public are anxious about brain death criteria."

He refused to comment on what occurred at the meeting and said that the committee had decided to reserve any public statements till after all the evidence had been collected.

Letters, page 17

Portfolio Gold Winner is to visit the sales

The joint winner of yesterday's Portfolio Gold plans to visit the sales to buy a washing machine with her half share of the £4,000 prize.

Miss Jennifer Sapsford, aged 36, of Norman Road, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, works as a radio operator for a taxi firm. She has played Portfolio for seven months.

A holiday might also be on the agenda later in the year, thanks to her Portfolio win, she added.

She shared the £4,000 prize with Mr Harold Holgate, aged 69, a retired Civil Servant, who lives in Kentford Road, Kents Bank, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria.

He and his wife Anne have three grown-up children and one granddaughter.

"I was quite pleased really, when I heard I had won, adding that he had not made a definite decision about spending the money yet, but thought an overseas holiday was a probability."

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Mr Harold Holgate, who might take a holiday

TV expert had never done stunt

An escapologist employed by the BBC to train Michael Lush to jump on an elastic rope for a television stunt said yesterday that he had no real experience of the sensation.

Mr Paul Matthews, who said he had 30 years' experience of magic and 20 years as an escapologist, was giving evidence on the third day of an inquest at Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

Mr Lush, aged 25, an unemployed food carrier, of Hobb Lane, Hedge End, near Southampton, died on November 13 when he plunged 120ft to the ground during training for the stunt, due to be screened live on the Noel Edmonds' *Late Late Breakfast Show*.

A bungee rope attached to him failed to arrest his fall as planned, the inquest has been told.

Mr Matthews told the jury that his only experience of bungee jumping was from a height of 40ft from a platform in a tree close to his home, in Hertford Road, Brighton, East Sussex.

Mr Rodney Corner, the North Buckinghamshire coroner, asked Mr Matthews: "Have you ever dropped from a height attached to a bungee rope?" He replied: "Not dropped".

Mr Corner asked: "Have you ever dropped from a height as Michael Lush was going to do?" Mr Matthews replied: "Not dropped, no".

He said that in the relatively short drops he had made using a bungee rope, he had fitted mountaineering-type clips like those he used for the stunt for which Mr Lush was being trained.

Mr Corner asked: "Did you understand and were being retained as the professional and expert for this stunt?" Mr Matthews replied: "Yes".

The hearing continues on Monday.

PC says he saw TV celebrity at sex parties

A policeman told the Cynthia Payne trial yesterday that he twice saw Terry Jones, star of the Monty Python television show, when he went to parties at her house.

Police Constable Stewart Taylor said at the Inner London Crown Court that, on the first occasion in December 1985 he had been in an upstairs bedroom with a tattooed girl called Annie.

He told the court that he had told the girl that he was too tired for sex and as they made their way downstairs they passed a group of people.

"I recognized one of the men in the group as Terry Jones, the TV personality."

PC Taylor, who had posed as a man called Peter Tollington to gain entrance to the house, said he went to his second party at Mrs Payne's house in Ambleside Avenue, Streatham, south London in February 1986 with PC John Jones, whom he introduced as his brother-in-law.

During the party he again saw Mr Jones. He was in the lounge with a group of friends, he said.

Mrs Payne, aged 53, has denied 10 charges of controlling prostitution.

PC Taylor described how Mrs Payne organized a candlelit floor show between two lesbians, placing cushions and a blanket on the floor of her lounge.

Two women came in and gyrated provocatively to music, undressed each other and ended up writhing on the floor.

He said that Mrs Payne stepped forward and indicated that they should swap sides, which they did, showing, he said, that she was directing their movements.

PC Taylor said Mrs Payne acted at the parties "with a certain bustling efficiency".

She spoke loudly and with authority, he said, often making introductions which led to couples going upstairs to the bedrooms.

The court was told Mrs Payne publicized her parties by letter.

One she sent to PC Taylor gave the address as "The House of a Thousand and One Delights".

Miss Theresa Banks, a former photographic model, said that she was massaging a client called Sydney Mills with oil when police raided the house on May 30 last year.

Miss Banks, aged 49, said that she had been wearing a pink dress, but took it off so she did not get oil on it, while Mr Mills had only removed his shirt for the massage.

But when shown a photograph taken as police burst in on them, she said: "Oh yes, he did have his bottom half off."

Miss Banks denied ever receiving money for sexual services, and said Mr Mills was an old friend.

She said while she was working as a model Mrs Payne had provided telephone numbers for contacts.

Mr Tony Longden, for the prosecution, said that in a statement made to police after the raid, Miss Banks allegedly said: "I came here to have a good time and earn a few quid."

But yesterday Miss Banks denied saying that.

Keith Savage, a transvestite, said that an undercover policeman put his hand up his skirt and fondled his bottom during the raid.

Mr Savage, who said he was dressed as a French maid, said 30 to 40 police officers burst in when the party was in full swing.

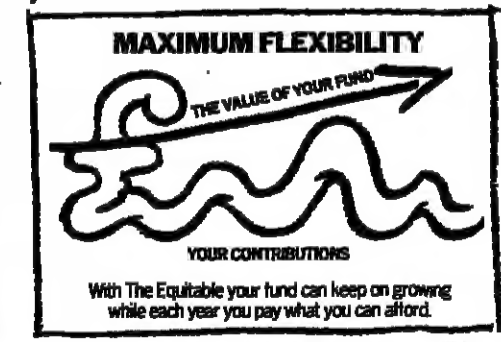
During the commotion one boisterous policeman got "a bit over-friendly", he said.

"He put his hands round my skirt on to my bottom," he said.

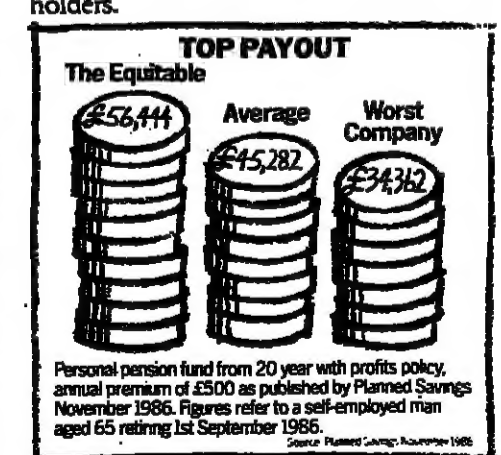
Monica Tobon-Ingram, a prostitute, told police that her sex sessions in Mrs Payne's bedrooms lasted for 10 to 15 minutes. One the night of the raid she told police she earned £80.

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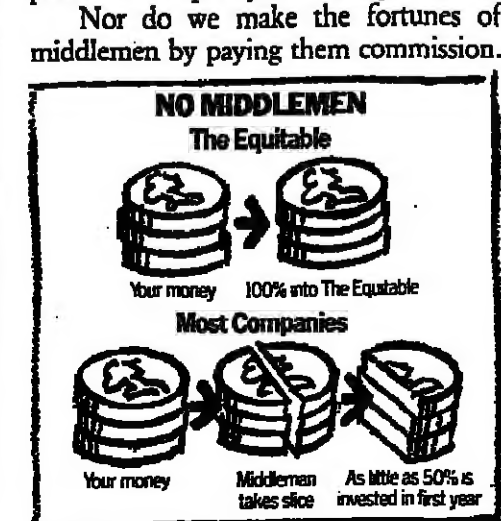
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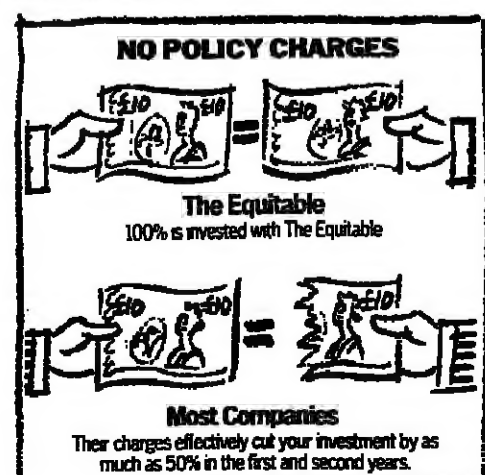
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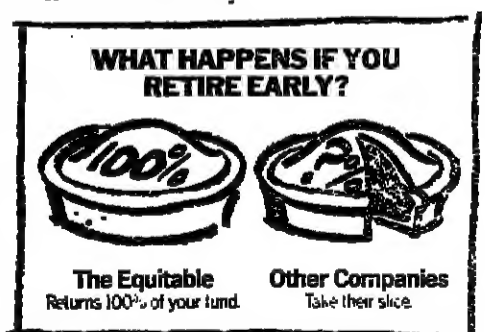
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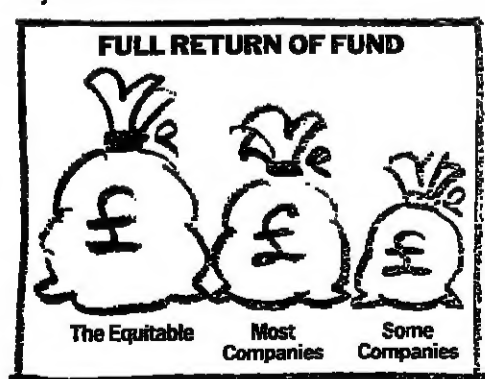
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Sale room £4,950 for early golf ball

By Geraldine Norman, Sale Room Correspondent

A golf ball was sold for £4,950 yesterday, more than doubling the previous auction price record.

The feathery golf balls made in the mid-nineteenth century are what golf fanatics long to own. This one was made by William Gourlay around 1850 and is in near mint condition. Its weight, written on it in ink, is still clearly visible.

Phillips' golf sale in Chester scored a run of exceptional prices, particularly among the books. *G. Robb's Historical Gossip About Golf and Golfers*, published in 1863, was sold for £12,320 (estimate £2,000 to £4,000) to Bruce Marshall, a

Glasgow book dealer. The third edition of Thomas Mathison's *The Golf, An Heroic Comical Poem of 1793* secured £10,560 (estimate £8,000 to £12,000).

Murder was the key-note at Christie's sale of arms and sporting guns. The collection of arms and memorabilia of trials in which Marshall Hall, the Rumpole of the twenties, had defended clients charged with murder, was sold for £3,960 to an unnamed British collector.

Marshall Hall took silk in 1898 and had a keen interest in firearms. The collection included the pistol with which "Prince"

Fahmy Bey was murdered by his wife, a Bowie knife which slit the victim in the "peeping Tom" murder on Doncaster racecourse and mementoes of many other famous crimes. The collection had been sold by Christie's in 1980 for £1,320.

Christie's routine sale of Old Master pictures made £386,958, with 27 per cent left unsold. The top price was £44,000 (estimate £3,000 to £4,000) for a painting of "The Good Samaritan" catalogued by Christie's as by a follower of Jacopo Bassano. The high price probably indicates that the bidders think they know who it is by.

Priorities in crime fight justified by Newman

By Peter Evans, Home Affairs Correspondent

Faced with manpower shortfalls and increasing crime, the police must make choices, concentrating on the things that worry the public. Sir Kenneth Newman, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, said yesterday.

Last week Sir Kenneth faced criticism over his announcement that Scotland Yard would no longer place car theft and joyriding high on the list of police priorities, despite the fact that it represents 27 per cent of the capital's crime.

Yesterday, addressing the Newspaper Society in London, Sir Kenneth defended the decision and his general strategy. "It would be self-defeating and irresponsible if we were to devote equal attention to every class of crime regardless of their human and social significance."

He said: "To succeed we have to concentrate, and up to a point to concentrate is to exclude. You cannot give high priority to everything."

Sir Kenneth made it clear his strategy resulted from a shortage of police to fight the trebling of recorded crime in the past 20 years.

He told the newspapermen and women: "If we were to give the same average amount of police time to each crime as we did 20 years ago we would need 70,000 officers in the Metropolitan Police, instead of the 27,000 we actually have."

"That is a stark fact which I would like to be more widely appreciated."

Sir Kenneth said that he asked Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, for 3,800 extra officers. Mr Hurd had agreed to an extra 1,200 over four years.

Sir Kenneth wanted public expectations to be grounded in reality when the strategic priorities of the police were considered.

He said he was accused in some newspapers of washing his hands of autocrime and taking a defeatist attitude. Such criticism was depressing because it was not intellectually serious. Such critics

ignored the reality of competing demands on scarce resources.

"I cannot do that. No chief officer can do that. This reality lies at the heart of every question about policy."

He pointed out he did not say that the force was going to ignore autocrime any more than it ignored fraud, or shoplifting or any other of the many crimes which were not separately mentioned in the force goal.

"Our priorities are based very much on what we learn about the central areas of public anxiety, not least from regular, professional opinion surveys. All the evidence points to burglary, robbery, violent crime, not least against women, drugs and vandalism."

"It is my firm conviction that the priorities of the police must reflect the priorities of the public that we serve. It is our policy to ensure that they do."

The police could make an impact on certain categories of crime, or geographical areas, by giving them a high claim on resources. For example, although annual cases of extortion had doubled to 28 in a year, the police had 100 per cent success.

Referring to the duty to maintain public order, Sir Kenneth said the dispute at Wapping, east London, was a burden to the police.

"It is a case of freedoms in apparent conflict. Some trade unionists wish to exercise their right to work; others their right to picket. A newspaper proprietor wishes to exercise his freedom to publish."

"The force are the marshals in this area of competing rights that has from time to time, exploded into violent conflict."

"Over 100,000 man days have been used in policing this dispute since it began at the end of last January. The deployment of an average of 300 officers per day has eroded the numbers of officers available for divisional street duty."



Tom Lee telling his tale to an audience, including Jenny Pearson (second from left), at the Brentford festival yesterday (Photograph: Alan Weller).

Everyday tale of the world, well and truly told

By Robin Young

Once upon a time Jenny Pearson was a reporter on *The Times*. Now she tells stories in Brentford, west London, and this week storytellers from all the world over have come to join her at it. It is, as they are apt to say in such circles, like a fairy tale come true.

"We have been meeting regularly on Tuesdays in Brentford for years", Miss Pearson said yesterday, "but until this week nobody knew we were here. If we said we were storytelling, they would say 'what is storytelling?'"

But when the likes of Kevin Locke ("Full-blooded Lakota

Sioux hoop dancer, flute player and storyteller", Godfrey Duncan-Tump ("The Unprecedented Unorthodox Preacher") and Abbi Patrix ("Europe's top professional storyteller") turn up at the Watermans Arts Centre in Brentford High Street the tale gets well and truly told.

The second International Storytelling Festival reaches its denouement at the Watermans Centre tomorrow having attracted countless modern media attention to the oldest message medium of all: the traditional folk tale.

Miss Pearson's regular workshops have become the basis of impromptu sessions in

which yarners, amateur and professional, swap likely stories before each evening's performance in the main auditorium.

Some of the stories, it must be admitted, are pretty hoary. Diane Wolkstein's, about the Great Goddess Inanna who tries to drink the God of Wisdom under the table and descends into Hell after losing her lover, has been around about 4,000 years.

It turned up originally on a Babylonian clay tablet, to qualify as the world's oldest written story.

A few of the amateur contributions seem similarly venerable, only more familiar.

But everyone listens in rapt attention to fables about such diverse matters as girls who marry rabbits, or geese who find themselves hanked up before courts peopled entirely with foxes, or fearless ghostly children, or transvestite knights who open their breastplates to reveal their gender as they gallop away.

"I am Marion and I come from Birmingham", announces a newcomer as she takes her place on the yarner's stool. "It took me five hours to get here."

The audience does not bat an eyelid. If she told them the story of her troubles with the traffic, one feels, they would

probably still be politely interested.

Miss Pearson says, after nearly two hours of stories tall, short, and improbable: "It has been a feast. I was writing books for children before I took up storytelling, but increasingly I could not believe that what I wrote was getting through to anybody. Now, when you tell a story, you can see their faces."

There will be another session tonight, and on Sunday Abbi Patrix leads the Festival participants, some 50 of them, in a celebration of storytelling. Admission £5, unless you have got a very good story.

Rent rebel loses five-year battle

A rent rebel yesterday lost his £35 million court fight on behalf of council tenants in Wandsworth, south London.

Mr Justice Mervyn Davies, sitting in the High Court, allowed the council's claim for £1,076 in unpaid rent which Mr Paul Winder has refused to pay after alleging increases in 1981 and 1982 were unreasonable and excessive.

His five-year battle to have the increases ruled unlawful came to an end when the judge accepted the council had taken its decision in a "conscientious and informed" manner. Mr Winder's claim that it had not done so was "extrav-

agant", the judge said. Since the council increased the rent on his flat in Wheatley House, Tangle Grove, Roehampton, from £12.06p to £16.56p in March 1981 and then to £18.53p in March 1982, Mr Winder has only paid what he considered to be a reasonable rent.

But although he intends to carry on fighting by writing to his MP, Mr David Mellor, Minister of State at the Home Office, he has already paid the council the money he owes. If he had won his fight the council would have had to hand back more than £35 million to tenants.

New Militant blow at Blyth for Labour

A second Labour party organizer resigned yesterday over allegations of Militant infiltration of the Blyth Valley constituency in Northumberland.

Mr Tony Craggs, chairman of Cranlington Young Socialists, left the constituency executive because of "extremist infiltration" — the same reason cited by a former local agent, Mr Peter Mortakis, who resigned a week earlier.

Mr John Ryman, Labour's sitting MP in Blyth Valley, has threatened to resign and force a by-election unless the party leadership takes action against the alleged Militant takeover.

Job training for adults to expand

By Ronald Faux, Employment Affairs Correspondent

The Government's new Job Training Scheme, designed to give training to young unemployed adults, is to be extended in spite of reservations by the Manpower Services Commission.

Lord Young of Gramham, Secretary of State for Employment, yesterday received the MSC's appraisal of the scheme, which has been criticized by Labour politicians and the Unemployment Unit as a lever to reduce the unemployment register below three million.

The MSC insists that the new scheme, one of a number of options offered at Restart interviews, must be kept voluntary and must not be allowed to become a means of conscripting the long-term unemployed into work for which they receive no more than unemployment benefit.

The commission has asked Lord Young to provide extra direct funding to ensure that the quality of the training remains at the highest standard.

Second post to expand and cover fringe areas

By David Cross

The Post Office is to extend its second mail delivery service to another 400,000 addresses on the fringe of town areas as part of a drive to improve efficiency.

A spokesman said yesterday that the change would guarantee two mail deliveries a day for 90 per cent of its 23.5 million customers.

"Even before the Christmas rush we were handling some 46 million letters a day, about 10 per cent up on the previous autumn period", he said.

"The improvements we have now agreed with our postmen will enable us to ensure that we can handle their delivery in a cost-effective manner and give a better overall service."

Regular checks would be made on all 60,000 postal rounds so that first deliveries were completed nationally by 9.30 am.

Other improvements announced by the Post Office yesterday included the ap-

pointment of 250 managers responsible for ensuring reliable deliveries and a new force of postal trouble-shooters to check mail delivery services and pinpoint weaknesses.

There will be a daily posting of test letters to see how long they take to be delivered.

"The British Post Office is already the only profitable postal service in the EEC to offer two deliveries to the front door in urban areas", the spokesman said.

The latest improvements were in addition to the £10 million already set aside during the present financial year to improve all-round postal reliability.

The Post Office has already announced that 20,000 jobs could be created over the next five years to handle the rising volume of mail.

Another 8,000 part-time jobs could be created by replacing some of the overtime now carried out by full-time staff.

Inquiry is launched into secret court case

The Lord Chancellor's Department yesterday launched an investigation into complaints about the decision of a magistrates' court to exclude the press and public from a drink-drive case because of the risk of injustice to the defendant.

The decision by the bench at Malvern, Worcestershire, is also to be discussed by the parliamentary and legal committee of the Guild of British Newspaper Editors, which described the decision as appearing to infringe the principle of open justice.

The court went behind closed doors after an application from Mr Adrian Gaylor-Smith, the defence solicitor, that it was necessary in the interests of justice. He said the circumstances of the case were extremely personal and the defendant had at one time been close to suicide.

After the hearing the press were readmitted to the court and told that Celia Hyatt, aged 41, a nurse, of Wells Road, Malvern, had been banned from driving for three months and fined £200. The court sheet showed her breath test reading was nearly twice the legal limit.

Yesterday, the Crown Prosecution Service described the situation as unusual and said it had asked to see the file on the case.

Mrs Liz Griffiths, editor of the *Malvern Gazette*, said she could not understand the legal basis for the decision and would continue to seek clarification through the Guild of British Newspaper Editors.

"It is not our concern to hound every individual, but rather to establish the basis for what appears to be a legal precedent. We are concerned that justice should not only be done but be seen to be done, and this will continue until a satisfactory explanation has been given," she said.

Mr David Newall, solicitor and secretary of the guild's parliamentary and legal committee, said: "The decision gives cause for concern as it appears to infringe the open justice principle. My preliminary view would be that the court had no lawful power in this instance to conduct the hearing in secret."

Mr Dennis Clare, clerk to the magistrates, said: "Normally the justices have no power to exclude the public unless justice would manifestly be defeated."

Chancellor powerless on delays

By Our Legal Affairs Correspondent

The Lord Chancellor has told the Law Society he is powerless to act over delays by some local authorities in replying to searches which are holding up conveyancing.

The society had expressed concern over "quite intolerable delays" by some councils, particularly in London, in replying to searches and other inquiries.

It cited delays of 20 weeks at Tower Hamlets, 16 weeks in Lambeth, 12 to 14 weeks in Hackney and eight weeks in Southwark.

In reply Sir Derek Oulton, permanent secretary at the Lord Chancellor's Department, said he agreed that delays were regrettable. But he said responsibility for the administration of the system rested with local authorities.

The Lord Chancellor "had no power under the local Land Charges Act 1975 to influence the conduct of individual local authorities."

The department had been approached by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities and the Association of District Councils which had offered to discuss the issue. It was also being studied by the Conveyancing Standing Committee.

January 23 1987

PARLIAMENT

MPs to debate banned TV film on Tuesday

MPs are to debate on Tuesday the film about an alleged spy satellite by Mr Duncan Campbell, which was banned by the BBC on security grounds. Mr John Biffen, leader of the House, announced in the Commons.

The debate would be on a Government motion arising out of the Speaker's decision that the film, the subject of a High Court injunction, should not be shown in the House before MPs had had an opportunity to discuss the matter.

The announcement brought requests from MPs that the debate be wide-ranging. Mr Peter Shore, the shadow leader of the House, asked why the Government had not yet tabled a motion. It was because the Government's intention was to seek to limit debate to the Speaker's action yesterday. It was a contemplation of a motion of a much wider scope that could be much more controversial.

Mr Biffen: The choice of the motion is a matter for sensitivity and judgement. The Government is considering the terms of the motion. Mr Cranley Onslow (Woking, C) wanted him to ensure that there was nothing in it that might impair the rights of the select committees and also that its terms were sufficiently widely drawn.

Mr Roger Sims (Chislehurst, C) said that, in drafting the motion, he should take into account that any attempt to lay down regulations which might in any way restrict the activities of MPs in the House should not be undertaken lightly or in haste. It should certainly not be taken on

Tuesday in the heat of the moment.

Dr David Owen, leader of the SDP, said that if he was leaning towards a broader motion he should bear in mind the recent debate on scrutiny of the security services. A mechanism of scrutiny was now necessary. Some form of procedure involving MPs of all parts of the House capable of being given sensitive information in guarded circumstances was a very necessary part of democracy.

Mr Biffen: There is a question of balance in considering how best we can proceed with this debate. I note the point he makes. This is controversial and no doubt will be raised again and again. Mr Peter Thurnham (Bolton North East, C) said he was sorry that time set aside for the deliberation on health service matters should be lost, which was spent time on debating the procedures of the House which were being misused by some MPs to pry into matters which they should best leave alone.

Mr Clement Freud (North East London, L) asked: This Biffen was satisfied that a proper debate could take place when some MPs had seen the film officially and some unofficially. Some had seen excerpts on ITV and others had read accounts of the film in the *New Statesman*.

Was it not time that the House was encouraged to see what it was going to debate before the debate? Mr Biffen: The debate arises essentially out of the problem of the injunction. If we then start to pick and choose as to whether we thought the injunction should or should not have been granted, we would be in some difficulties in this matter.

Aids 'war cabinet' proposed

A move to improve the monitoring of Aids (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) was made in the Commons when a private member's Bill designed to disseminate more information about the disease was given a second reading. Mr Gavin Strang (Edinburgh East, Lab), moving the second reading of his Aids (Control) Etc Bill, said a great deal had been learnt about the disease. It was known that if people could understand the facts and respond to the guidance they were receiving they could reduce their chances of becoming infected to a negligible level.

However, it had to be said that, on the assumption that there would not soon be a cure and on even the best assumptions as to the efficacy of the Government's campaign, this was going to be a crisis certainly until the end of the century. It was the biggest crisis in public health certainly for over half a century.

The essential purpose of the Bill was to lay a statutory duty on the district health authorities in England and Wales and the health boards in Scotland to produce an annual report on Aids. This report would have to be submitted to the Secretary of State and would become available to Parliament on February 1 1988. The statistical data would refer to the position at November 30 of the previous year.

It was crucial to recognize that this was not simply a report of what the authority had done. It was a report on everything that had been done within the area of the authority in relation to Aids. It would help promote better co-ordination between the different agencies and it was vital to have a report of the treatment and counselling.

Ms Jo Richardson (Barking, Lab), welcoming the "modest" Bill, said that it introduced measures that nobody could possibly object to and that ought to have been going for a number of years, if only they had woken up to the problems earlier. Mr David Crouch (Canterbury, C) said that the Bill was necessary as Britain was facing the beginning of an Aids epidemic. More information was needed.



Strang: A crisis to end of the century

This was a time for planning and not for panic. Resources could only be mobilised when the country knew what it was up against.

There was a need for co-ordination. The Government should set up a "war cabinet" or a crisis centre to deal with Aids. There should also be a national Aids council comprised of health workers, social services officials, voluntary workers and others. That council should have the authority to call on the resources it needed.

Mr Roger Sims (Chislehurst, C) said that it was not being part of any campaign against homo-

sexuals to point out that in the United Kingdom at present Aids was primarily a homosexual disease. There was a special responsibility on the homosexual community as to how to behave among themselves and the extent to which they sought to interest and involve others, especially young people, in the homosexual community.

Discussion often centred on whether this was a moral issue. He was sure ministers should not moralize. He was not sure that chief constables should, but sometimes he would like to see rather more members of the clergy moralizing, particularly on issues of this sort.

Dr John Marsh, an Opposition spokesman on health, said the Bill would put the spread of Aids on a quantifiable basis and, in due course, would enable the authorities to verify the scope of the problem.

"We will have some kind of check on whether the Government's advertising programme is having an effect." One of the effects of the Bill would be to help counter ignorance, alarm and scaremongering.

The Opposition wanted to be convinced that the Government was putting resources in the right place to back up its concern. Money for Aids must be provided over and above any other provision for the NHS.

Mr Antony Newton, Minister for Health, said that the Government believed a number of problems would be created if the Bill was enacted in its present form. One of these was the threat to confidentiality to Aids patients.

The Government was ready to accept the basic purpose of the Bill but had very serious reservations about the detail of some of its drafting.

Bill to help farmers move off the land

A Bill to allow the Agriculture Training Board to offer a wider range of training opportunities for farm workers forced off the land by cut-backs in production, was given an unopposed second reading in the Commons.

It received a general welcome by members on all sides, including the Government. Mr Gerrard Nesle (North Cornwall, C), the Bill's sponsor, said that farmers were under pressure to reduce production of a wide range of agriculture commodities.

Alternative businesses included tourism, model farms, pony trekking, photography and the exploitation of skills such as in Cornwall, the manufacture of surfboards.

Mrs Elizabeth Shields (Rye-dale, L) said that the Alliance supported the Bill, which was essentially an employment measure. The board's proposed new responsibilities would be important, if only to restrain produc-

ers from going into unsuitable enterprises or diversifying without the appropriate skills. Mr John Home Robertson, an Opposition spokesman on agriculture, said that it was only a matter of time before drastic changes were going to have to be imposed on the industry. New uses would have to be found for farm buildings. There must be new enterprises like tourism, crafts and sports.

Mr Donald Thompson, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, said that the Government was happy to welcome the Bill.

It would give a great deal of help to those farmers who wished to take it.

Leisure parks were looked upon with fear only a few years ago. Now it was seen that leisure parks and theme parks gave a great deal of employment to people living in the surrounding countryside.

Jews 'should sue for libel'

By Michael Evans

A prominent Israeli judge who has read the script of the anti-Zionist play, *Perdition*, which was cancelled by the Royal Court Theatre, said yesterday that a libel action should be taken out "to stop the spread of such lies".

Mrs Hadassa Ben-Itto, a district judge in Tel Aviv, who is in London representing an international association of Jewish lawyers, criticized the play by Mr Jim Allen as blatantly anti-semitic.

She said: "People say that *Perdition* should have been left alone and that only a few theatregoers would have seen it anyway. But I think that is wrong."

"One should not allow these lies to be spread without setting the record straight. We have been libelled for so many years and it is now time to sue for libel. I think the

Jewish people need legal representation so that anyone who begins to believe the stories that there never was a holocaust, or that Jews would be told the true facts."

The play, whose cancellation has caused an outcry from the author and the actors involved in the rehearsals, claims that Zionists in Budapest collaborated with the Nazis over the Hungarian holocaust to generate international sympathy and to bring about the state of Israel.

Mrs Ben-Itto, who lost most of her family in the holocaust, said: "I read the play and it is unbelievable. It is a big lie."

"It is not enough to cancel the play. I am sure they will try to put it on somewhere else. I can see how the tables will be turned. They will say, 'look, how strong the Jews are, they

have had this play cancelled', and opinion could swing against us."

She said that the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists would be giving the matter "top priority" to see what action could be taken.

Mrs Ben-Itto has been engaged in a campaign on behalf of Jewish people ever since 1965 when several countries tried to pass a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly that Zionism was a form of racism.

Only apartheid and Nazism had, until then, been branded by the UN as racism.

Mrs Ben-Itto said: "The sort of lies that appear in *Perdition* have been made many times before. I was there when the 1975 resolution was passed. I shall never forget it."

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WORLD SUMMARY

Iran rebuffs 'new approach by US'

Tehran (Reuters) — President Ali Khamenei, below, said yesterday that US officials made a new attempt to contact Iran, but were rebuffed.

"The Americans tried hard to make contact," Mr Khamenei said in a sermon at Tehran's main Friday prayer meeting. "This time their State Department officials with great difficulty found those intelligence agents of ours who had been involved in the McFarlane affair and attempted to pursue the same issues."

● **BAHRAIN:** Iran yesterday rejected a peace offer from Iraq after firing missiles into Baghdad and Basra (Reuters reports). Iraq threatened "devastating punishment" for the raids, in which several civilians were killed.

Tehran Radio said Iranian forces killed or wounded 2,000 Iraqis on Thursday night while advancing west of Basra.

Shift on US bases

Athens — Mr Andreas Papandreu, the Greek Prime Minister, expressed publicly for the first time yesterday his willingness to negotiate a continued US military presence if it secured adequate returns for Greece (Mario Mediano writes).

He did not elaborate, arguing that he wanted to keep "a few troops" up his sleeve. Greece receives about \$500 million (£325 million) a year in US military credits. Mr Papandreu was speaking in Parliament to counter opposition criticism that his government's foreign policy was alienating western support for Greece.

Chad says 193 killed

Ndjamena (AFP) — Chad Government forces killed 193 Libyan soldiers and captured 22 when they took control on Wednesday of the strategic north-western oasis of Zouar after a three-week confrontation with Libyan forces.

A spokesman for President Habré of Chad claimed that the Zouar region had been completely cleaned up and that Government forces had lost only 10 dead and a small amount of equipment in the fighting.

A Libyan spokesman said however, that the fighting is between the Chad Government and its opponents, with no Libyan troops involved.

Drink-drive furore

Paris — M Alain Chalon, the French Justice Minister, has announced that the Government is preparing tougher penalties for drunken drivers after public anger over a one-year suspended prison sentence was given to a man who caused the death of a model, aged 24, after an evening spent drinking with friends (Diana Geddes writes).

M Chalon has asked the Public Prosecutor to appeal against the sentence handed down by a court in Nanterre against Michel Barraud, aged 37, an insurance consultant. The Minister complained that courts were often too indulgent with drunken drivers.

It is estimated that alcohol is responsible for 4,000 of the 11,000 deaths on French roads every year. Anne Cellier died after "appalling suffering" as a result of injuries she received when M Barraud's vehicle, travelling at 93 mph, ran into the back of her car on a motorway outside Paris.

Chilean recall

Santiago — The Chilean Interior Ministry has published a new list of 154 exiles who will be allowed to return to their homeland after up to 13 years abroad (Lake Sagor writes). But the Chilean Human Rights Commission says that the problem of exiles is far from resolved.

Thousands fled the country after the armed forces seized power in 1973, killing the President, Dr Salvador Allende, and many of his supporters.

Bokassa accused

Bangui, Central African Republic (AP) — For the first time since his trial began over a month ago, testimony has implicated directly former Emperor Jean-Bédel Bokassa in murder. Three soldiers told yesterday of being ordered in 1979 to murder a Frenchman, M Edmond Broudy, accused of brandishing a pistol. They said Bokassa was furious when he found Broudy had permits for weapons and could not be arrested.

Doubt on Machel plot

Johannesburg — A retired British deputy Director of Civil Aviation, Mr William Young, told the inquiry into the air crash which killed President Machel of Mozambique last October that he did not think a decoy radio became a likely cause of the disaster (Michael Horsby writes).

The theory of a "rogue" radio signal, supposedly transmitted by the South Africans to lure the plane to its doom, has dominated the inquiry proceedings, which began on January 20, over the past two days. Mr Young is an expert on radar and radio interference.

India moves up troops on Pakistan border

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi

India raised the stakes yesterday in the growing tension on the border with Pakistan by moving military formations closer to the frontier in Punjab. At the same time, according to the Defence Ministry, Delhi proposed mutual withdrawals.

Pakistan's Ambassador, Dr Humayun Khan, was summoned to the External Affairs Ministry to be told of the action taken.

The Defence Ministry said Indian Army units had moved into defensive positions along the border and that if Pakistan did not respond to the proposal for speedy de-escalation, "we may have to occupy our defences in Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir".

The tension started to increase last autumn, when Pakistan began objecting to India's three-yearly winter exercises which were building up close to the border. Pakistan's own annual manoeuvres have also taken place since, but the forces deployed were not withdrawn from their positions when the exercises ended.

The Government will soon announce new measures aimed at fighting the spread of Aids among drug addicts. Ministers are increasingly concerned that the general population is at risk from the epidemic among addicts.

Mr Norman Fowler, the Secretary of State for Social Services, said here yesterday that the next phase of the British Aids campaign will be targeted at intravenous drug abusers.

"This is one of the most serious problems that we face in trying to control the spread of the disease," he said. "It is also one of the principal ways that Aids gets into the heterosexual population."

Mr Fowler conceded that the Government experimental scheme to issue sterile needles to addicts in exchange for old

Defiant Reagan will not give up the dirty war

Whatever his regrets over the Iran affair, President Reagan is determined not to sacrifice the Contras, or as he prefers to call them, the Freedom Fighters in Nicaragua.

But if congressional enthusiasm for their cause was only lukewarm a few months ago, it has now all but disappeared. The Contras, in most people's minds, have been the real undoing of the Reagan Administration.

Fekless, faint-hearted, corrupt, ineffective and linked to dubious middlemen, mercenaries and drug dealers, they have dragged the Administration into a dirty and hypocritical war which it is increasingly clear they cannot win. It is the Contra link that is the real scandal of the Iran arms affair, the disappearance of the money that suggests criminal wrongdoing.

That is not President Reagan's view. Support for the Contras is a touchstone of conservatives in the Administration. In most of his few public statements about Iran, Mr Reagan has appealed to the US not to abandon the Contras, not to allow the diversion of funds to weaken their cause.

Defiantly, he is asking for an increase in military and humanitarian aid, proposing \$105 million (£68.5 million) in Contra funding for the 1988 budget. "It is the one thing he will not give up," a White House aide said.

But he knows he will have a bitter fight over the issue. Mr Frank

Carlucci, the able and experienced National Security Adviser, recognizes that this will be the most contentious foreign policy issue over the coming year. Indeed he is planning to visit Central America himself soon, so that he can see for himself the situation, without having to rely on partisan assessments.

He may not like what he finds. The mood in Managua at present is more buoyant than it has been for years, according to recent visitors. The Sandinistas believe they already have the Contras beaten in the field, and the political challenge appears also to be fading. Despite

the new arms that are now flowing to the groups in the northern jungles, the Nicaraguan forces are training and morale to take on the guerrillas who are still not trained sufficiently to handle Stinger missiles.

But ironically, observers here believe, the Contras will not be liquidated — at least not for two years — as both Washington and Managua have a vital interest in keeping them alive.

If the Administration was told starkly the Contras were finished, and it had therefore the alternative of recognizing the entrenchment of the Sandinistas or using US forces to get them out, President Reagan would probably choose the latter. He has admitted that the end of the Sandinista Government is his real objective. He has painted a dire picture of the consequences of their victory. He has staked his reputation on not letting communism gain a foothold on the American mainland.

Mr Elliott Abrams, his combative Assistant Secretary of State, has openly stated that if the Contras

cannot do the job, the US Marines may have to. But an attempt to mount an invasion would now cause uproar in the country and in Congress. As long as the Contras are there, the fiction of intervention by proxy can be maintained.

For the same reason, the Sandinistas do not want to crush the Contras completely. As long as their pinpricks can be confined to the border zones and the sparsely populated jungles, they are no military threat. Indeed their existence is essential as justification for curbing opposition in Nicaragua, enforcing "emergency" regulations, waving the flag of patriotism in the face of outside aggression. They have probably been advised by Moscow to sit it out for two more years. It is unlikely that any future US President will support the Contras with Mr Reagan's zeal.

Meanwhile, the scepticism here mounts daily. The latest revelations suggest that some Contra groups have been using the CIA-sponsored airline, Southern Air, for drug smuggling, as well as weapons drops.

The riddle of the missing millions

donated by the Sultan of Brunei to the Contras has still not been solved, nor has any of the missing Iran arms money been found.

Opponents of US involvement in the Contra war are nevertheless cautious. The Democrats still cannot afford to be seen as soft on communism.

They will probably therefore vote for at least some new aid for the Contras. The debate will be fierce, the contempt for the Contras widely voiced.

But opponents of the guerrilla war are convinced that time is not on the side of the Contras, and sooner or later the US will cut its losses.

● **Public scepticism:** Two-thirds of Americans think that President Reagan is not doing all he could to determine the facts about the Iran arms scandal, according to a Washington Post-ABC news poll (Mohsin Ali writes). The poll of 1,505 people taken on January 15-19 showed sharply increased public scepticism about the White House handling of the Iran arms affair, with 60 per cent disapproving of Mr Reagan's conduct of foreign affairs.

Washington View

By Michael Blayton

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Habib visit airs US-Europe animosity over Contras policy

By Andrew McEwen, Diplomatic Correspondent

Strong disagreement between the US and Europe over Washington's policy in Nicaragua was aired openly yesterday as an American search for European understanding, even if not acceptance, of the use of force against the Sandinista Government fell flat.

Mr Philip Habib, President Reagan's special envoy on Central America, flew from London to Paris on the last leg of a seven-nation tour. But he was expected to find no more encouragement there than in London and other capitals.

Throughout his tour, Mr Habib has met strong opposition to the use of force against the Government in Managua through arming the Contra rebels.

His discussions in London with Mr David Gillmore, deputy under-secretary for Latin America, produced clear disagreement. Mr Habib presented President Reagan's case for a two-track approach to Nicaragua, backing diplomatic efforts with military support for the Contra rebels.

His argument that diplomacy without force would not bring about genuine democracy in Nicaragua gained weight in the light of the failure this week of renewed efforts by the Contadora group of Latin American nations to negotiate a settlement. Contadora foreign ministers have said that their peace-making tour failed to find the political will for reconciliation.

A US official said that Mr Habib had stressed that Europe gave too little importance to the views of democratically-elected governments surrounding Nicaragua.

The official quoted President Arias of Costa Rica as having said: "We didn't like Somoza — now we have got nine Somozas". President Somoza, succeeded by his sons, led Nicaragua until the Sandinista coup of 1979.

Mr Gillmore stressed Britain's opposition to a military solution and support for the Contadora group, which comprises Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama, plus five supporting nations. Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, had planned to present Britain's reply to Mr Habib, but was instead called to a meeting with Mrs Thatcher, the Prime Minister.

Mr Habib's prospects in Paris look bleak. M Jean-Bernard Raimond, the French Foreign Minister, is opposed to force, but has shown a lack of enthusiasm for the Sandinistas by redistributing French aid. Paris is now sending less to Nicaragua and more to its neighbours.

The timing of Mr Habib's tour is linked to an important meeting in Guatemala City on February 9 between foreign ministers of the EEC, Central America and Contadora. The meeting is likely to strengthen Europe's peace-making role at the expense of Washington's influence.

Known as "San José 3", the meeting will also aim to forge closer economic links. Lady Young, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, is to represent Britain.

Union leaders here ignored appeals yesterday from business leaders, backed by the main right-wing opposition party, the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), to turn a shutdown of shops, factories and private companies into a general strike.

Left-wing guerrillas kept traffic off the roads and right-wing shopkeepers shut their businesses in an attempt to squeeze President Duarte out of office.

Under attack from all sides, Señor Duarte has shrugged off calls for his resignation, while the Army has discounted rumours of an impending coup.

Though his popularity has been damaged severely by lack of progress on the problems confronting the country, the President's position is strengthened by deep distrust among his enemies.

Their mutual aversion has so far remained stronger than their desire to unseat the

Government by uniting against it.

APEN, the private enterprise association, declared the stoppage to have been 97 per cent effective in the capital. Even some sectors traditionally loyal to the President closed.

The commercial boycotts in the cities coincided with a transport stoppage in the countryside, the second this month, as left-wing guerrillas threatened to machine-gun vehicles moving on the roads.

After having carried out such threats during recent similar campaigns, the rebels have succeeded for the first time in stopping traffic in the west of the country, as well as in the east.

They too distanced themselves publicly from the strike action of the right, making clear in clandestine radio broadcasts that theirs was an entirely different agenda for the Government's demise.

God's judgement, page 18

Unions resist call for Duarte strike

From Alan Tomlinson, San Salvador

Union leaders here ignored appeals yesterday from business leaders, backed by the main right-wing opposition party, the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), to turn a shutdown of shops, factories and private companies into a general strike.

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God's judgement, page 18



A masked Spanish student gesturing at police as he stands next to an overturned car in Madrid yesterday after a march by tens of thousands of students demanding free access to universities. The march degenerated into a series of violent clashes among rival groups of students and police in which two people were injured seriously and several arrested.

Progress on SDI 'dramatic'

From Mohsin Ali, Washington

Mr Caspar Weinberger, the Defence Secretary, said yesterday that the US is making dramatic progress on the controversial Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) and may be near the day when decisions about deployment of the first phase of strategic defence can be made.

He did not say when such a decision might be taken.

Mr Weinberger cited progress in recent US tests of space-based sensors to track the flight of Soviet nuclear missiles and in lasers which might burn them up in flight.

"There is no doubt the SDI research effort is achieving dramatic results. We are rapidly validating a number of technologies and technical concepts which provide sufficient evidence of the feasibility of a strategic defence system," he told the National Space Foundation at Colorado Springs.

He said that the Soviet Union was spending \$1 billion (£650 million) a year on laser research and moving towards its own nuclear missile defence. "In some areas, the Soviets have progressed well beyond the research stage."

In a speech to the Denver Rotary Club, Mr Weinberger yesterday strongly denounced as counter-productive and dangerous the recent calls in Congress for withdrawal of American forces in Europe. He said that the US would not live in a world in which Western Europe was overrun by the "Soviet hordes".

"Western Europe is freedom's front line and by far the greatest attraction for Soviet ambitions," he said. US troop withdrawals could result in an eventual unravelling of NATO and the neutralization of some of "our strongest allies."

● **LONDON:** Mr Max Kampelman, chief US arms negotiator at the Geneva East-West talks, implied yesterday that agreement was close but gave no hint of a solution on the central problem of Star Wars (Andrew McEwen, Diplomatic Correspondent, writes).

"We are close to agreement on approximately 50 per cent reduction to equal levels of strategic warheads, and 90 per cent reduction to equal global limits of 100 intermediate warheads each, with none in Europe," he said.

However, in a speech in London to the Royal United Services Institute, he strongly reaffirmed President Reagan's determination to continue research on the Strategic Defence Initiative. "It would be highly imprudent for any American President not to pursue such a programme."

Some of the most far-reaching reforms of the Gorbachev era are about to be introduced into the stagnating Soviet film industry, which will try to recreate its former glory by a complete reorganization aimed at eliminating the stifling hand of the Communist state censors.

The sweeping changes, which will centre on the granting of editorial and financial independence to individual studios along the lines of those operating in the West, were unveiled yesterday after a special plenary session of the powerful Cinema Workers' Union in which 210 speeches were made.

As part of the shake-up, cinema seat prices will be increased, more popular and controversial films made, bureaucratic control of scripts will be reduced and many Soviet films gathering dust on the censors' shelves will be put on general release.

The move is seen as part of Mr Mikhail Gorbachev's campaign to recruit the Soviet intelligentsia into the vanguard of his increasingly tough battle to overthrow the organizational structure of many areas of Soviet society imposed during the now discredited Brezhnev era.

Mr Elem Klimov, aged 53, the recently-elected chief of the union whose own film *Asphalt*, focusing on the antics of Rasputin, was shelved by the censors for 10 years, told a press conference that the reforms represented a unanimous protest by the union against previous Soviet film-making methods.

The respected director explained that many more West-

Extensive reform planned to break censorship's shackles

From Christopher Walker, Moscow

ern films would now be bought by the Soviet industry for general release here, beginning with *Amadeus* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, made by the émigré Czech director Milos Forman, and a season of Federico Fellini films. He said there would also be a re-organization of the Moscow Film Festival.

Commenting on the reforms, which are expected to bring a new wave of Soviet films to local and international screens by the beginning of 1989, Mr Rolan Bykov, a leading member of the union's secretariat, said: "A studio in the Soviet Union will now be able to run the risk of going under, or being ruined. That is something that has never happened before in a socialist state."

In Western circles, the shake-up is described as the most extreme example yet seen here of efforts by Mr Gorbachev to increase both individual responsibility and financial independence in Soviet industries without giving up the main ideological tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

Under the switch, Mosfilm and other big state studios will be broken down into smaller units, which will then be responsible for financing their own productions. The individual studios will also take over the censorship role formerly carried out by the central state body, Goskino.

"The studios will look for scripts and choose them, shoot the films and prepare them for release," Mr Klimov explained. "We are creating a market for film-makers. If one studio rejects a director's film, he can go to another." The

union leader denied that the reforms would lead to the setting up of private studios.

Other members of the film establishment sharing the platform for the two-hour conference admitted that the reforms posed the risk of "commercialization", but all denied vigorously that making more popular films would involve increasing the amount of sex and violence contained in them, both of which are much more restrained here than in Western films. "Pornography is against the law," Mr Klimov said.

Under the watchful eye of the Kremlin's chief public spokesman, the conference — which could never have been staged two years ago — heard from the Soviet Union's most influential film critic, Mr Andrei Plakhov, about the work of the commission which he heads in reviewing the fate of scores of Soviet films formerly banned by the all-powerful bureaucrats at Goskino.

Mr Plakhov, who formerly worked for *Pravda*, explained that a substantial number of the banned works would soon be put on general release. He told journalists that the commission was working for long hours with the aim of "re-establishing justice".

Yesterday's speakers admitted that the Soviet industry had been losing audiences because of the poor quality of its product, and were especially critical of the facilities for bringing on young directors. It became clear that one purpose of the reforms is to tempt home talented Soviet artists who have emigrated to work in the West.

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The craft averaged 16 miles an hour.

On Wednesday, Lois McCallin flew the craft over 10 miles in 37 minutes, 38 seconds, establishing the women's closed-course distance record.

Mr Tremml pedalled three times over the 10-mile course, chalking up 37.2 miles in two hours 13 minutes and 14 seconds. He nearly continued further, but a minor mishap caused the plane's wheels to touch down. The trip went ahead even though Mr Tremml said he had pedal and water problems.

When he climbed out of the cockpit on Thursday, clad only in black cycling shorts and a T-shirt, he was jubilant, and said: "You just keep going until you stop. The toughest

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The 9

Wave of French unrest puts 'cohabitation' and Chirac under pressure

The strikes, student unrest and pressure on the French franc over the past two months have struck a severe blow at the opinion poll rating of M. Jacques Chirac, the Prime Minister, and at public attitudes towards the experiment of political cohabitation.

A poll in this week's *Paris Match* shows that M. Chirac's popularity has fallen nine points to 39 per cent, giving him a negative rating in that poll for the first time since becoming Prime Minister 10 months ago. President Mitterrand's rating remained stable at 56 per cent.

Another poll, to be published in Monday's *Le Français*, shows M. Chirac's rating as a potential presidential candidate plunging 19 points over the past three months, while that of M. Raymond Barre, his main rival on the right, has risen a spectacular 16 points.

Asked who would be the best presidential candidate of the right, 41 per cent chose M. Barre compared with only 15 per cent for M. Chirac.

Both of those polls were taken at the height of the rail, electricity and Paris Metro strikes. A third poll, taken after the strikes and the showing on national television of a sympathetic portrait of M. Chirac, suggests that his unpopularity may be short-lived.

In that poll, published in yesterday's *Express*, his public approval rose one point to 47 per cent, while approval of President Mitterrand fell 7 points to 49 per cent.

In his weekly press briefing yesterday, M. Denis Baudouin, the Prime Minister's spokesman, admitted that most opinion polls were not good for the Government at present, but pointed out that the electorate did not seem to

think any other team would do better.

The wide gap in voting intentions between the right and left has remained stable since the right's victory in the general election last March, he said. Recent by-elections had confirmed that there was no swing away from the Government, despite its difficulties.

Commenting on a poll showing a clear majority of the public now disapproving of cohabitation — the arrangement in which the conservative M. Chirac governs under the Socialist President Mitterrand — M. Baudouin



M. Chirac seeking stronger ties with Parliament.

said that it was not a question of whether cohabitation was good or bad but rather whether the country would prefer the alternative of political crisis.

The Government was determined to avoid a crisis, so cohabitation would continue, he said.

M. Chirac is to hold a presidential-style press conference on Thursday, surrounded by his Ministers, to outline the Government's programme for the coming year after his decision to slow the hectic rate of reform — 49 laws passed in nine months.

Some of the Government's more controversial projects, such as its university reform Bill and another restricting eligibility for French nationality, have already been abandoned or postponed indefinitely. An extraordinary session of Parliament planned for this month has been called off. Parliament is now due to resume on April 2.

In the interim, M. Chirac intends to explain his policies to the country, to strengthen his relations with Parliament, and to weld the dangerous divisions within the ruling right-wing coalition. Four trips to the provinces are already lined up, starting with a visit to Alsace next Monday.

But the Government's troubles are far from over. Pay talks with the seven unions representing the 4.5 million workers in the public sector broke down on Thursday after the unions rejected an offer of 1.7 per cent this year.

Even some of the more moderate unions are now talking of industrial action. The teachers have already announced a one-day strike for Tuesday.

There are also rumours of more terrorist attacks in the capital if complicity in murder charges are not dropped against Mr Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, alleged leader of the Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Front.

The Paris Appeal Court is due to rule on Wednesday on whether Mr Abdallah should be sent for trial to the Assize Court. The same court is to decide on Thursday whether three alleged Directe terroristists, charged with killing two French policemen, should be tried before the new non-jury terrorist court, composed of seven judges. A criminal court trial was abandoned because of threats to the jury.



A retired farm worker employing pedal power to take Chinese children to a neighbourhood kindergarten in Shanghai as part of programme in which retired workers involve themselves in community work.

Kohl overcomes TV handicap

Floating voters may spring surprise

From Richard Owen Bonn

Television is not Chancellor Helmut Kohl's natural medium. If — or when, according to the final opinion polls — he wins tomorrow's election, it will be thanks to his personal image and his personal contacts with voters rather than to his television appearances. He often looks uncomfortable on television.

At his final campaign press conference yesterday, Herr Kohl acknowledged that elections in West Germany, as in other democracies, tend to be fought on the television screen. But he made a point of criticizing those who had said it would be a television campaign only: attendance at election rallies around the country had been astonishingly high, especially considering the weather, and he had spoken to over half a million voters at 61 rallies to get his message across.

A heartening number at the rallies had been young people, most of them responsible in behaviour with only a minority of teenage hecklers from Communist splinter groups or the Greens.

The hecklers have, in fact, given Herr Kohl a much harder time than this suggests. But West Germans, including the nearly four million first-time voters, do tend to take their democratic duty seriously. They talk a great deal about democracy and the importance of not taking it for granted.

On the other hand, the lack of exciting issues has made for a dull campaign. Herr Kohl rejected the Social Democrats' proposal for a face-to-face television duel with Herr Johannes Rau, the SPD lead-

er, apparently because the Chancellor's advisers felt that Herr Rau would come off better.

Instead all the party leaders met in a television studio to make their final bids for votes. Yesterday, they all expressed unhappiness with this format (it is known unofficially as "the elephant room" because of the bulk of most of the participants).

But in the event Herr Kohl's performance was relaxed and authoritative, suggesting that he can be a much better television performer than is commonly said. He made no gaffes during the three hours of somewhat confused debate, and had the advantage over Herr Rau of being able to speak in his normal voice.

Herr Rau has become so hoarse in the course of desperate campaigning to retrieve the SPD vote that he could hardly be heard, and had to take repeated swallows of what looked like blackcurrant cordial to carry on.

Because of poor chairmanship rather than gripping discussion, the election debate overran its allotted two-hour span, though whether many voters stayed the course seemed doubtful. Many were irritated when a planned film about the pneumatic Hollywood star Mae West was abandoned so the debate could continue. The legend "Mae West is cancelled" appeared somewhat incongruously over the figure of Frau Jutta Dittfurth, the young feminist and anti-nuclear campaigner chosen by the Greens for their rotating leadership to represent them.

Although the Greens are likely to get just over 8 per cent of the vote, compared to 45 per

cent for the conservative CDU-CSU coalition and just over 37 per cent for the SPD, Frau Dittfurth dominated the debate with Herr Kohl, making the Greens rather than the SPD appear the main opposition party. She was helped by the television station's own research, which showed that environmental protection is West German voters' number one concern.

Frau Dittfurth, hair flowing and a contemptuous anti-bourgeois smile, attacked Herr Kohl for having played on nationalism during the campaign and supporting West Germany's membership of an "aggressive" Nato, accused

deserting on us," Frau Dittfurth said accusingly. "Not at all, these are public statements," Herr Bangemann protested.

At this point the debate came alive, and Herr Strauss, who at 71 still nurses substantial ambitions and has been playing a new-found role as the voice of moderation and restraint, produced a last-minute vituperative attack on the Greens for their soft attitude to communism and followed this up with a blistering attack on the "illusions" of détente.

He accused the Liberal FDP of "propaganda bordering on lies" for suggesting that he wanted to replace Herr Hans Dietrich Genscher, the Liberal Foreign Minister, in order to reverse West Germany's Ostpolitik altogether.

For a moment it looked as if Herr Bangemann's intervention, designed to persuade voters to support the Liberals and thus keep both the Greens and Herr Strauss out of national office, had stirred the election debate out of its torpor. But it was too late to develop the argument.

Viewers were left with Herr Kohl again confidently outlining his successful middle-of-the-road policies on Nato, nuclear power, unemployment, disarmament and the family. As for his espousal of German national pride and identity, young Germans had to confront the past and learn from it, he said.

Tomorrow will see whether he has convinced the 45 million West German voters, 18 per cent of whom — according to the television poll — have not yet made up their minds for whom they are going to vote.

German view, Page 16

"You have been keeping a

WEST GERMAN ELECTIONS

Herr Franz Josef Strauss, leader of the CDU in Bavaria, of wanting to be Foreign Minister and sell German arms to fuel Third World conflicts, and dismissed Herr Rau as a fake socialist.

Only Herr Martin Bangemann, the FDP leader and Economics Minister, was able to turn the tables by producing a thick folder of quotations from Green leaders recommending and justifying the use of force and violence in opposing the deployment of nuclear weapons or the construction of atomic power stations.

SPD challenger, should distance himself from it. Herr Rau simply laughed at him.

Six of the small parties are entering the federal lists for the first time. The Marxist-Leninist Party, founded in 1982, is a "revolutionary party of the working class". Its result in the state election in North Rhine-Westphalia in 1985 was exactly 0.0 per cent.

The Patriots for Germany, formed last year, are a right-wing group best known for their election posters which scream "Stop AIDS!" They scored 0.3 and 0.0 per cent in state elections in Lower Saxony and Hamburg last year.

The Women's Party dates from 1979, but has never done better than 0.1 per cent in the three state polls it has fought since 1982. The Adult Citizens Party has still to grow up after drawing 0.0 per cent in North Rhine-Westphalia.

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The Pensioners Party did better in the Bremen state election in 1983 with 1 per cent, but their hopes for improvements were dashed two years later when they drew 0.0 per cent in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Another new party which was expected to fight and do well poll is the right-wing Republicans, based in Bavaria. The party jolted Herr Franz Josef Strauss, leader of the Christian Social Union and Prime Minister of Bavaria, by gaining 3 per cent of the vote in the state election there last October.

However, they have decided to postpone their march on Bonn until the next poll.

During his trips to Tokyo as a trade unionist to try to save the firm, he soon found that the executives thought little of Mitsubishi's debt to the mine which founded its fortune. Used to an island less than three miles around without trains, his children are afraid of moving to the mainland city of Nagoya where he has the prospect of a new job.

The idea may be daunting, but he is one of only 32 of the 900 men who have so far been offered work. The traditional industries — coal, steel and shipbuilding — of which the southern island of Kyushu has more than its fair share — are all in steep decline; local job opportunities are rare.

Kyushu is also called "Silicon Island" because of the concentration of electronics-based industries, but the average age of the miners makes them unsuitable.

The generous separation terms afforded miners — a year's money from the company and two years on government unemployment benefit after that — are little comfort to families who have to leave their birthplace workless in a country where the saying: "If you don't work, don't eat" has lost little of its potency.

German view, Page 16

Small parties with impossible Bundestag dreams

The also-rans achieved a total vote of only 0.5 per cent at the last poll, foundering like most small parties that have made a bid for Bonn since 1949, by failing to gain the minimum 5 per cent of the vote needed to take seats in the Bundestag.

On the far left, the German Communist Party (DKP), which was last represented in Bonn in 1953 and scored only 0.2 per cent at the last two federal elections, is not competing this time. It has backed off to give the Peace List pacifists a better chance, but has also told its former supporters to give their vital second votes to the Social Democratic Party (SPD) or to the Greens.

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The Patriots for Germany, formed last year, are a right-wing group best known for their election posters which scream "Stop AIDS!" They scored 0.3 and 0.0 per cent in state elections in Lower Saxony and Hamburg last year.

The Women's Party dates from 1979, but has never done better than 0.1 per cent in the three state polls it has fought since 1982. The Adult Citizens Party has still to grow up after drawing 0.0 per cent in North Rhine-Westphalia.

The Liberal German Work-

ers Party, according to the Bonn Interior Ministry's latest report on internal security, is another neo-Nazi group. But its best result in four state elections since 1980 was 0.1 per cent after three zeros.

The Pensioners Party did better in the Bremen state election in 1983 with 1 per cent, but their hopes for improvements were dashed two years later when they drew 0.0 per cent in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Another new party which was expected to fight and do well poll is the right-wing Republicans, based in Bavaria. The party jolted Herr Franz Josef Strauss, leader of the Christian Social Union and Prime Minister of Bavaria, by gaining 3 per cent of the vote in the state election there last October.

However, they have decided to postpone their march on Bonn until the next poll.

German view, Page 16

Small parties with impossible Bundestag dreams

The also-rans achieved a total vote of only 0.5 per cent at the last poll, foundering like most small parties that have made a bid for Bonn since 1949, by failing to gain the minimum 5 per cent of the vote needed to take seats in the Bundestag.

On the far left, the German Communist Party (DKP), which was last represented in Bonn in 1953 and scored only 0.2 per cent at the last two federal elections, is not competing this time. It has backed off to give the Peace List pacifists a better chance, but has also told its former supporters to give their vital second votes to the Social Democratic Party (SPD) or to the Greens.

Chancellor Kohl pounced upon the DKP's recommendation to accede to the SPD of being in pact with the communists and demanded that Herr Johannes Rau, his

SPD challenger, should distance himself from it. Herr Rau simply laughed at him.

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January 24 - 30, 1987

SATURDAY

A weekly guide
to leisure, entertainment
and the arts

Sentenced: five figures of speech

PETER LEVI Writer

SIR JOHN KINGMAN Professor

P.J. KAVANAGH Poet

ROBERT ROBINSON Broadcaster

KEITH WATERHOUSE Journalist



‘He expects much from his readers, and yet he is not a slave to boring rules’



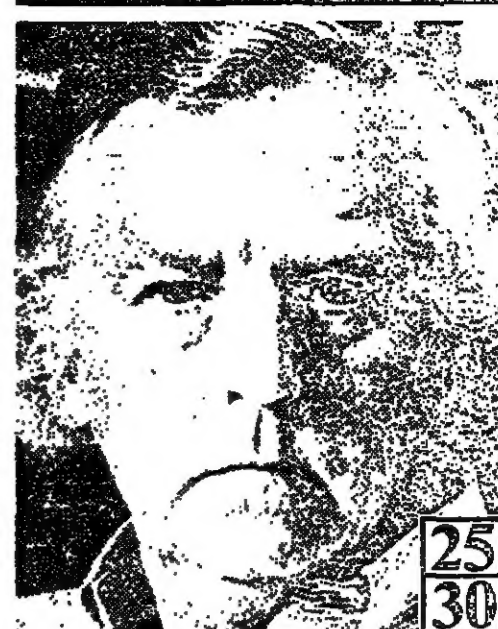
‘He starts with a mistake, leaving the reader anxious; then he assumes too much’



‘He probably makes his living writing, betraying himself in a turn of phrase’



‘Not intended for consumption by the C stream of the country’s comprehensives’



‘The most amusing of the five and has the best flow of thought and shortest sentences’

Language,” wrote Dr Johnson, “is the dress of thought.” Since then, however, the Great Doctor’s mother tongue has been having a rough time. It has dressed everything from soap powder to grievous bodily harm and, in the process, the sheer flexibility of English has been strained to breaking point.

So, last week, Kenneth Baker, the Secretary of State for Education, did what politicians do best: he set up a committee. His idea was to establish some “model of the English language, whether written or spoken,” to be used in the nation’s schools. Fifteen of the Great and the Good are to mull over the language of Chaucer and Wyatt and decide in what form it should be taught at Grange Hill Comprehensive.

C’n’t Cs, though, are an odd lot. Plucked from the obscurity of a government filing cabinet, they are expected to develop a spectacular expertise in anything from drains to aircraft carriers within months and then produce a definitive report. Drains are one thing; the lovely, infinitely complex, continually changing web of English is quite another. How do you qualify to pontificate upon the nature of a tool which, in one incarnation, can be used to buy baked beans and, in another, to address the lifeless body of Desdemona?

The answer is you do not — Shakespeare is dead and the language has been thinned and

standardized ever since. Nevertheless, we are still stuck with Baker’s one and a quarter dozen. So *The Times* decided to put them to the test: not a perfect test by any means, but a reasonably objective one.

We picked five members of the committee and unearthed samples of their own prose. These we sent to Martin Cutts of the Plain English Campaign and he subjected them to the kind of scrutiny usually reserved for tax forms, company reports or, indeed, Aids leaflets.

Cutts was on his own. The samples were judged absolutely blind — in fact he could not even make an educated guess as he confessed he had missed the news reports listing the names of the committee. The results were spectacularly revealing. Simply cutting out the names and judging the pieces as anonymous snapshots of the present condition of the language highlighted their extraordinary variety and the way, even in the most routine piece of journalism, personalities emerged through the fabric of the prose.

Yet, varied as they were, Cutts immediately pointed out that they had one thing in common. They were all, he said, “writing for a *Times* and *Telegraph*-reading audience who want more than to be informed — they want to be interested, stimulated, pleased and to have their attention held and their intelligence flattered a little.” This means that some of the basic Plain

English Campaign criteria are not relevant — these pieces were intended to do more than tell their readers how to take tablets or fill in their tax forms.

Allowing for a degree of entertainment value rather than pure information transfer, then, Cutts proceeded to take them apart.

Sample A was an erudite little number on the subject of classical education in England composed, unknown to Cutts, by Peter Levi, Professor of Poetry at Oxford.

“He expects,” Cutts observed with a hint of weariness, “much from his readers.” Not only were there long words to cope with, there was also the assumption that everybody knew that Sicily was once full of Greeks rather than Italians. Fair enough, of course, for a certain audience, but a real problem did arise when Levi tried to join his introduction to his main argument.

One paragraph began: “Considering that this...,” but neither Cutts nor I could quite determine what “this” was, nor whether the words “same spirit” in the paragraph referred to the spirit of poetry or warfare.

Levi, though, won praise for not being a slave to boring “rules.” Cutts has no time for the argument that sentences should not begin with “but” nor that they should never end with a preposition. Levi used both. Cutts discovered only one actual grammatical slip: the use of “not” in a sentence without a preceding negative.

Writer B — in fact Sir John Kingman, chairman of the committee — had a tougher task in keeping Cutts entertained as the sample chosen was an article calling for the establishment of a Ministry of Science. It was not exactly an Ode on Intimations of Immortality, but revealing nonetheless.

Oddly, he starts with a mistake at the same critical point where Levi faltered — joining his preamble to his main argument. Cutts objected to his saying “This system has a number of serious weaknesses” and then going on to enumerate only two. This leaves the reader waiting anxiously for numbers three, four or five.

Then this later sentence assumes too much: “Only the Treasury takes an overall view, a fact whose implications do not need to be spelt out.” For almost everybody, argues Cutts, they do. Finally

A committee has been given the tricky task of judging standards of school English. How qualified, though, are these experts? Bryan Appleyard put some of their own work to the test



Kenneth Baker: benchmarks



Antonia Byatt: critical view

The panel set up by Mr Kenneth Baker is likely to have a major influence over the way children are taught, and teachers trained, into the next century. The Education Secretary wants the panel to set benchmarks of achievement at the watershed ages of seven, 11 and 16. Mr Baker has said that he hopes it will establish what pupils at those ages “should have been taught and can be expected to understand.”

The panel’s work arises from a belief that schools need to put greater emphasis on fundamentals. “Most schools no longer teach old-fashioned grammar,” Mr Baker says, “but little has been put in its place. Pupils need to know about the workings of the English language if they are to use it properly.”

In addition to the five members featured here, there are ten others on the panel, including the critic Antonia Byatt and Mr Brian Cox, president of the National Council for Educational Standards, as well as teachers and an industrialist.

the Plain English Campaign suffered a “deadly shudder” at the phrase “take little cognisance of” — surely the word “notice” would have been much better?

P.J. Kavanagh was writer C. His sample was a profile of the playwrighting Shaffer brothers, Peter and Anthony. Cutts detected at once that he was dealing with a professional writer — “He probably makes his living writing, betraying himself in a journalist’s and novelist’s turn of phrase.”

Kavanagh’s giveaway sentence came in his first paragraph. “Behind the eyes of both men there is a kind of startled stillness, the expression of someone who has received unexpectedly brilliant news and dares not move too violently in case he frightens it away.” This is about as far as you can get from the company information sheets that form the bread and butter of the Campaign’s work, but Cutts concluded that it was the best sentence in the piece.

“After that,” he observed, “writer C seems to have become very bored, reciting the twins’ life stories in the usual profiling manner, a quote here and a quote there. Mostly it is hard to tell whether Peter or Anthony is being described but it doesn’t matter much anyway.”

Writer D tends to arouse strong pro or anti opinions whenever he puts pen to paper or wins an argument on radio. He was Robert Robinson, the urbane apologist for the not-very-strongly-held opinion. His sample was snappily titled “An Oxford Essay for the comprehensiveness of drama” and was not, as Cutts put it, “intended for consumption by the C stream of the country’s comprehensives.”

Indeed, Cutts drifted far into the anti-Robinson lobby — even questioning whether it was worth writing about student drama in the first place. But his irritation was prompting him to exceed his brief and he had to be dragged back into line. Pulling himself together,

Cutts coolly attacked this 93-word monster as incomprehensible.

“Perhaps it was the ornate, not to say rococo, location of the audience on that occasion that made me feel the real play was taking place offstage: the play that was disrupted did not disrupt the real play, of which the one you auditioned for was simply an ingredient — and on the night in question a pretty minor ingredient at that, with my green scales swathed in a handy raincoat, a bottle of South African sherry at my lips, and viewing the various *tableaux vivants* which had developed, I was able to judge.”

Keith Waterhouse was concealed behind the pseudonym E. His piece was about the number of unwritten letters to *The Times*. It was, said Cutts, “the most amusing of the five and has the best flow of thought.” Much to the delight of the old campaigner, Waterhouse came out with the shortest sentence of any of the samples — “So do I” — as well as the second shortest — “Do not be alarmed.” Alas, Sir Ernest Gowers, guru of the Plain English people on the basis of his masterpiece *Complete Plain Words* (HMSO, £5.95), would not have smiled benignly upon the use made by the creator of Billy Liar of the word “case.”

In one sentence he writes: “In my own case, because most of my novels are effectively in the first person, even when written in the third, in that everything is seen through the eyes of the hero. And in a second sentence he writes: “the embossed notepaper of the Old Rectory, in their case, will remain forever virgin of that declamatory ‘Sir’.”

In both cases (sorry) the words are unnecessary. Cutts and his guru prefer the word to be used to refer to the thing you pluck off the luggage carousels at airports. This, he felt, was an error very similar to one of Levi’s — using two unnecessary sentence openings: “It will be seen that... and ‘It should also be remembered...’ He found them bureaucratic, I found

Secretary of State such anxiety, but they have already advised examiners on how to ensure that the rubric at the top of an exam paper is not a stiffer test for pupils to comprehend than any of the questions beneath it.

The campaign works with Gowers at its elbow, and has little time for superstitions and shibboleths which do not serve the sense.

“To us it is often necessary to split an infinitive,” declares Cutts. And he would not regard even a sentence beginning with “and” and ending with a preposition as automatically a solecism which (if clarity demanded it) he should refuse to charitably give his sanction to. Though I suspect he would draw the line at that one.

George Hill

	Peter Levi	Sir John Kingman	P.J. Kavanagh	Robert Robinson	Keith Waterhouse
For clarity of language for the intended audience	9	9	9	7	9
For organisation and flow	7	5	4	8	9
For giving pleasure in the use of language	9	3	2	8	7
TOTAL 30	25	17	15	23	25

them redolent of scholarly pseudo-modesty.

Cutts’ conclusion was: “Overall they all write well” (your reporter takes exception to the tautology of overall-all as well as its nasty sound) “but very Oxbridge and very scholarly. We expect nearly all did Latin at school — perhaps Mr Baker will recommend a Latin revival for the better understanding of English grammar.”

As for whom he would most like to read, B (Kingman) could not have held his attention and D (Robinson) was very boring and C (Kavanagh) was too routine. A (Levi) was good for the subject matter and E (Waterhouse) was the most fun. For pleasure, Cutts himself reads P.G. Wodehouse: he also likes the writing of the political commentator

Hugo Young and, hair-raisingly, the American On the Road writer Jack Kerouac — not exactly a mainstream defender of the Eng Lit faith. He adds, with shocking candour, that he gave up on English literature about 10 years ago.

As for the committee, they should perhaps mull over some other words of Dr Johnson (who would surely have been a Waterhouse lover) in the introduction to his dictionary: “I am not yet so lost in lexicography, as to forget that words are the daughters of earth, and that things are the sons of heaven.”

Author’s note: The above was not compiled under the Plain English Campaign’s writing restrictions.

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SATURDAY

Whisky galore: heart-warming winter tipples for a Burns Night to remember, p11

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The battle for good English

Britain’s word-torturers and clause-tanglers have cringed under the assaults of the Plain English Campaign since 1979. Its annual distribution of Golden Bull awards for the year’s prime examples of circumlocution, and Plain English awards for good deeds in the matter of clarity, have done more to amend the dialect of the tribe than any number of homilies in learned journals.

The campaign started as a private crusade against language as a cloak to meaning, mounted by two young media workers in Liverpool. Martin Cutts worked in a small printing press, Chrissie Maher as a researcher with the BBC, and the campaign was launched from Chrissie’s front room with such flair for publicity that it soon became the acknowledged champion of

anybody who has ever had to puzzle over an official form. They began with a ceremonial shredding of documents in Parliament Square, and carried on from hand to mouth for a couple of years, sometimes falling back on the dole, without any inkling that their enterprise could ever become a self-supporting one.

They have never received any grants for their principal work from their generic victims, the nation’s public bureaucrats.

“You see how naive we were at first,” says Martin Cutts. “We found that organizations began to come back to us and say: ‘If you say we’re doing so badly, show us how to do it better.’ In the early days we did help them as a completely free service, and then we realized we should be sending them bills. Now the campaign

is just about a paying proposition — you could say it is a rags to better rags story.” Today the campaign has a staff of 10 and an office in Whaley Bridge, near Stockport.

It advises government departments, councils and companies on graphic design and how to lay out a publication so that it can be easily understood, as well as on verbal clarity. They handle 500 or more jobs a year, most of them quite small, but some involving documents of many thousands of words. The campaign also provides courses to wean officials and lawyers away from “whereas,” and “give devise and bequeath.”

At the moment they have not developed courses designed for use in the schools whose standards cause the

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TRAVEL 1

Tranquil Dutch treat

Amsterdam's enduring charm is reflected in the surface of her 160 canals. Stewart Tendler took a weekend break by ferry and car to savour the peace

Each night the guardians of Amsterdam open the lock gates, releasing the waters of the central canals and gently filtering the louche old lady's ageing furred arteries. The green-grey waters of the 160 canals are cleansed beneath tree-lined streets and the magnificently gabled homes, inherited from the days of Holland's trading empire.

In the Rembrandtsplein, late drinkers sit behind the glass screens of the cafes and trams rumble home, clanging peevishly at unwary jaywalkers.

The cleansing of the canals is a process as timeless as the city itself. Nearly 7,000 buildings, dating from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, survive intact. Traffic is negligible at night and the walker finds a serenity difficult to imagine in a city of 700,000 souls.

Perhaps the water deadens the noise or imposes its own tranquillity. At night, lights burn beneath the bridges reflecting on silent surfaces. It is easy to imagine being temporarily transported two centuries or more into Amsterdam's past. To step aside for a bewigged merchant arriving at the stairs to his home on the Herengracht, or for a servant scuttling to his kitchen through the doors below, would come as no great surprise.

Both would find some things unchanged by the passage of time. Even today many of the city's treasures and its attractions lie within or close to the three rings of canals which give Amsterdam its peculiar charm. The city's publicity machine boasts a tourist menu which ranges from the 6,100 animals in the Artis Zoo to 24 diamond-polishing factories, 206 paintings by Van Gogh, 70 glass-topped canal boats and an



Transports of delight: boats on the canals and bikes on the narrow streets leave cars behind

extraordinary flower market. Numerous short city break packages to Amsterdam can be found. But Car Holidays Abroad, operated by Carvas Holidays - the Hertfordshire specialists in motoring tours - has added a new twist, offering motorists a short break to the city by Sealink from Harwich via the Hook of Holland.

However, since Amsterdam so heavily favours pedestrians and cyclists, such a scheme has limited attractions. It takes nearly seven hours to make the crossing and then more than an hour to drive into Amsterdam on a motorway system which can be very confusing. Once in the city, parking is expensive and driving difficult in the centre.

Taking a car works best for those who already know Amsterdam and want to use it as a base to explore Holland or

for day trips further into the Low Countries and Germany. Once the road system is mastered, motorists can reach out to the wide sandy expanse of beaches along the North Sea - just an hour from Amsterdam.

Or you can delve deep into the Dutch countryside. Alkmaar offers its cheese market and Delft its pottery, and to the north lie the great reclamation schemes of the IJsselmeer. At the end of the day Amsterdam awaits with fine food and abundant night life. To get the best from such a deal it makes sense to extend the three nights offered in the package by making the two crossings as night trips with berths.

Overall, the Car Holidays scheme left much to be desired. The three-star hotel had no parking, which meant finding somewhere on the street or

paying a small fortune in a car park.

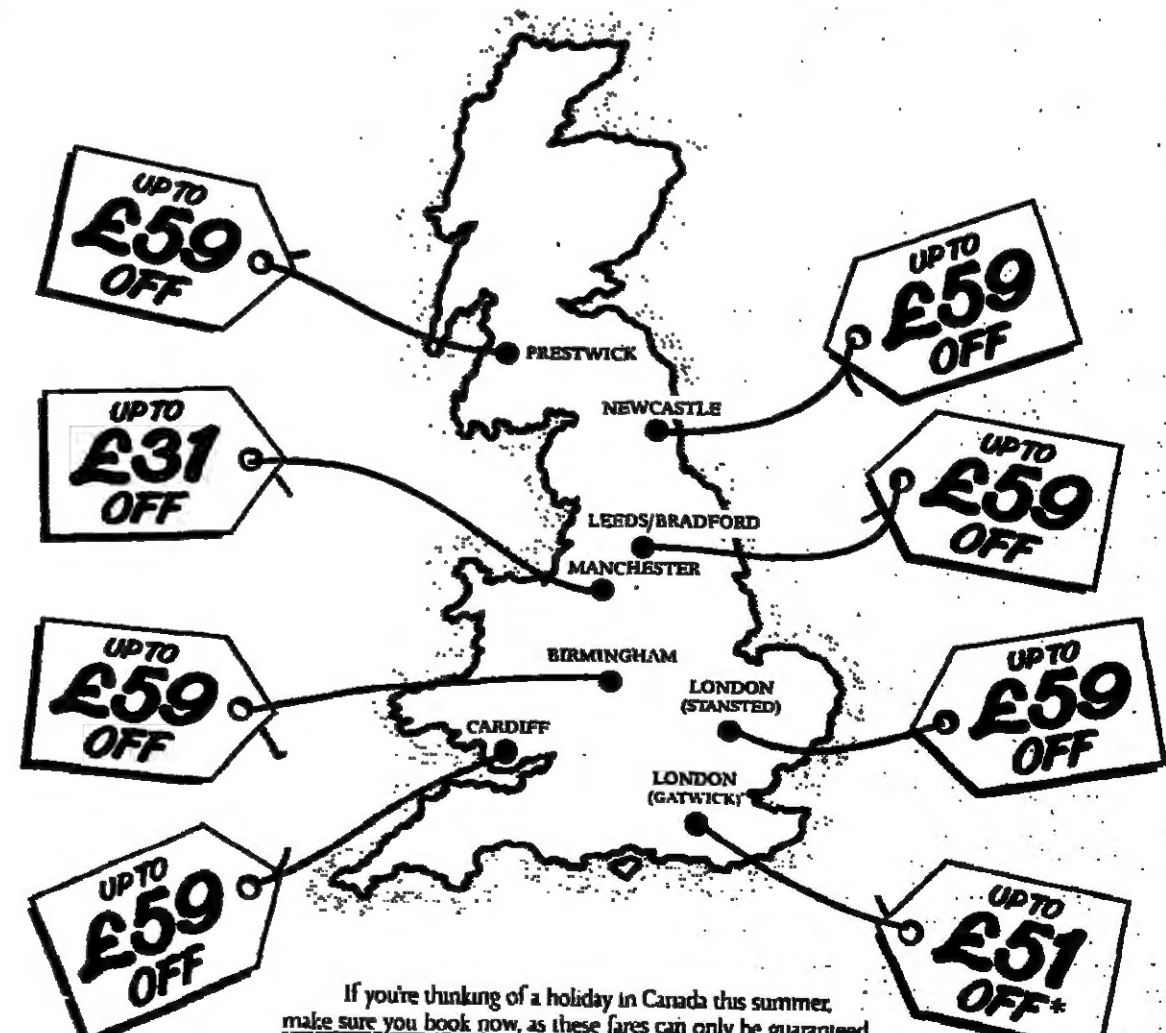
The hotel was undergoing a facelift and getting to your room meant going up in one lift and then down in another to bypass the workmen. Stay too long in the wrong lift and you ended up in the basement kitchens. The booking was supposed to include breakfast but the hotel knew nothing of this, informing us that breakfast could cost £3 per head. For three of us for three days it would have cost more than £80. Telephone calls to Britain cleared up the matter, but the unseemly haggling spoilt the holiday.

The final blow was to discover on the way home that the cabin we had booked was for two people when we were travelling with a child old and big enough to sleep in a separate bed. It was a cramped night. Clearly Car Holidays need to do a bit more research on the value of city/car packages and their own arrangements.

TRAVEL NOTES

The Car Holidays Abroad package, including three nights in a hotel for two people plus the crossing, costs from £313 to £352. Contact them on 0932 59933.

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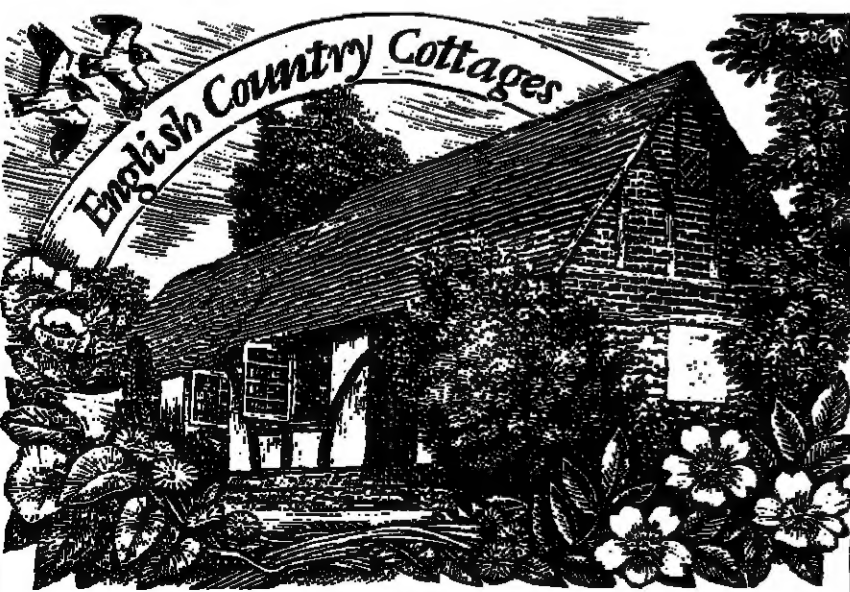
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THE TIMES COOK

One potato, two potato

Shona Crawford Poole gets to work on the not-so-humble spud

Dore Lashbrook



In winter, any supermarket in France or Switzerland seems to supply those small, waxy potatoes that are so good for gratins and salads. Inside they are a pale, buttery yellow. Their flavour is rich and earthy.

Potatoes that will not fall apart when boiled are the essential ingredient for this chunky potato pie from Normandy. With its rich crust, crisped top and creamy filling, it is a country dish to serve with plainly roasted or grilled meats.

Potato pie
Serves eight
200g (7oz) plain flour
Salt
100g (3½oz) butter, diced
1 egg plus 1 yolk
For the filling
1.25kg (2½lb) small potatoes, peeled
100g (3½oz) butter, melted
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
150g (½ pint) crème fraîche or soured cream

To make the pastry, combine the flour and salt and rub in the diced butter until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the egg yolk and mix to a dough, adding a little water if necessary. Form the pastry into a ball, cover and chill for 2 hours.

Peel and thinly slice the potatoes. Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil. Drop in the potato slices. Bring the water back to boil as fast as possible and boil the potatoes for four to five minutes. They should be cooked but not breaking up. Drain them well.

Roll out the pastry thinly and use it to line a circular loose-bottomed tin of about 20cm (8in) diameter. A spring-clip cake tin is ideal. Line the pastry with greaseproof paper and

weight it for blind-baking with dry beans. Bake the case in a pre-heated, moderately hot oven (200°C/400°F, gas mark 6) for 10 minutes. Remove the paper and beans. Fill with layers of potato slices, sprinkling each layer with melted butter and a liberal seasoning of salt and pepper. The potatoes should fill the case generously.

Re-roll the remaining pastry and cut it in narrow strips. Arrange them in a lattice design on top of the pie and glaze it with the whole egg, beaten. Continue baking the pie in a moderate oven (180°C/350°F, gas mark 4) for about 35 minutes. Then pour the cream into the pie through the holes in the lattice, and return it to the oven for a final 10 minutes.

Unmould it while it is still hot and serve at once. Potato pie is particularly good with strong flavours like roast, smoked loin of pork.

One of the best of the many versions of sliced potatoes cooked in milk, cream and cheese that abound in French cooking is also, alas, the richest. For the ultimate

potato treat, make this Roux brothers rendering of gratin savoyard taken from their book *New Classic Cuisine*, published by Macdonald.

Savoyard potatoes
Serves four
650g (1½lb) medium potatoes
¼ clove garlic
500ml (18fl oz) double cream
4 tablespoons milk
Freshly grated nutmeg
Salt
Freshly ground white pepper

Peel the potatoes carefully, wash them and slice them on a mandoline; the slices should be only about 3mm (1/10th inch) thick. Spread them on a table and sprinkle lavishly with salt. Rub the slices together, then heap them in a pile and leave for five to 10 minutes. The salt will extract the water and soften the potatoes.

Combine the cream and milk in a saucepan large enough to contain the potatoes later. Salt very lightly (remember that the potatoes are already salted). Add two turns of the pepper mill and grate in a little nutmeg. Set over a high heat and bring to the boil for several minutes. Rub a medium grain dish, preferably made of fine metal, with the half clove of garlic dipped in salt.

Press the potatoes lightly in your hands to squeeze out the excess water. Add the potatoes to the boiling cream and bring the mixture back to the boil. Remove from the heat and, using a large spoon, spread the mixture evenly in the prepared dish. The gratin should be 5-6cm (about 2in) thick.

Bake it in a pre-heated cool oven (120°C/250°F, gas mark ½) for about 45 minutes.

This dish reheats well if baked in an equally slow oven.

DRINK

High in the Highlands

Jane MacQuitty suggests fitting ways to celebrate Burns Night tomorrow

A small single glass of a rare single malt is perhaps the whisky connoisseur's preferred Burns Night tipple but, given the recent sub-zero temperatures, I shall be toasting Robbie Burns with a hot whisky toddy.

A Scottish friend introduced me to the perfect hot toddy recipe a decade ago and, since then, this comforting drink has cheered up many an arctic winter evening. It also happens to be the best cold cure I know. So forget about those namby-pamby pharmaceutical preparations and, for a blissful, cold-free, uninterrupted night's sleep, take the following with two aspirin just before getting into bed.

Whisky Toddy
2 generous measures whisky
Juice of half a lemon
2 teaspoons honey to taste

Place all the ingredients in a heatproof glass or mug, top up with boiling water and stir gently until the honey has dissolved. Standing a spoon in the glass will prevent non-heat-proof glasses from cracking.

If this sounds rather too tame a dram to down after eating the "Great Chieftain of the Puddin' Race", using roughly the same ingredients try creating a Blue Blazer, an amazing fiery concoction that is listed in the original 1930 edition of *The Savoy Cocktail Book*.

Blue Blazer
2 measures whisky
2 teaspoons honey
Twist of lemon peel
2 measures boiling water

Warm the whisky, pour it into a flame-proof tankard or mug and carefully set light to the contents. When the flames die down, top up with boiling water, add the twist of lemon peel and stir in the honey until it has dissolved. It may not do your cold any good but it will provide you with a Burns Night to remember.

If honey and lemon are traditional partners to whisky then so is Drambuie, that sticky Scottish liqueur made from honey, whisky (including malt whisky) and herbs. The makers still support the legend that the original recipe for this popular liqueur came from Bonnie Prince Charlie as a gift to the Mackinnon family, his protectors on the Isle of Skye after the bloody battle of Culloden Moor in 1746. Even sceptics will love the following classic Scottish drink.

Rusty Nail
1 measure whisky
1 measure Drambuie
Twist of lemon peel
Ice cubes

Put ice in a small glass, add the remaining ingredients and stir. If it's freezing cold both inside and out forget about the

ice cubes. Drier palates may prefer to step up the whisky proportion to two measures whisky to one measure Drambuie.

The Scottish version of a Manhattan called, appropriately enough, a Rob Roy, will also go down well.

Rob Roy
2 measures whisky
1 measure red vermouth (either French or Italian)
1 dash Angostura bitters
Ice cubes

Put all the ingredients into a mixing glass, stir well and strain into a cocktail glass. For those who like that sort of thing the glass can be decorated with a maraschino



cherry. Once again, if it's bitterly cold forget the ice cube.

Irish coffee has helped keep me warm and awake at the end of many a cold day's skiing. And although Irish traditionalists (of which I am not one) swear that only Irish whiskey is capable of making the exact magical combination with fresh coffee, I have often used Scotch and no one has complained. The vital point is not to let the cream melt into the coffee. If it does, a dreamy, blended morning brew will simply be the result.

Burns Night Coffee
1 measure whisky
1 teaspoon brown sugar
Double cream
Extra strong, extra hot, fresh black coffee

Place the sugar and whisky in the bottom of a tall heat-proof glass. Add the hot, freshly ground coffee (not instant!) leaving sufficient room for the cream. Stir until the sugar has dissolved. When the coffee is still and has cooled slightly, gently pour the double cream over the back of a teaspoon on to the surface of the coffee.

For all these recipes a good blended Scotch whisky rather than a single malt will be perfectly adequate. The super-markets are now a useful inexpensive source of these whiskies: Asda's blended Scotch whisky is still a good buy at £6.65, and even better is the Co-op's low strength Arden House (£5.99), plus their wonderful Heathcote (£6.35) and Majority (£6.69) blends. *Slaime nhalh!*

EATING OUT

Gathering winter fuel in comfort

Countries that are habitually on the receiving end of the climatic boogymen that we have experienced lately are not only better prepared to cope with frozen roads and debris as high as houses, they have also evolved a repertoire of dishes that are effective fuel in such conditions.

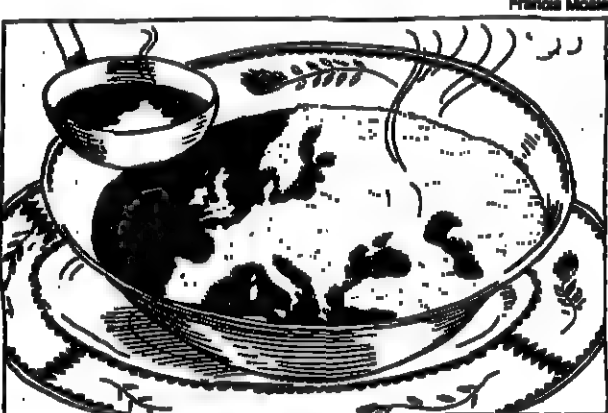
Such dishes - hefty stews and braises and the like - tend to make up in soothing blandness and comforting unctuousness what they lack in finesse. They are best made at home where they can mature on the stove, but if home is where all the water is frozen apart from that which is seeping through the ceiling, maybe you will want to get out. The thing to seek is the sort of cooking that does its warming job without setting in the pit of the stomach like cement, rendering you immobile.

The Czech Club, a few doors away from the Acol bridge club, which gave its name to a bidding system, opened in the 1920s and has been a home from home for successive generations of exiles. Once

inside, you leave England far behind.

In the back room, where there is a tablet commemorating London Czechs who fell in the Great War, some young men are drinking beer and singing and ribbing each other and making enough noise for 40. On a notice board is a letter from the White House in which the Great Communist thanks the members of the club for their contribution to this fund or that. In the restaurant, a portrait of Churchill scratches the door. This is an extraordinary room, where expense has been manifestly spared on the furniture. But it is quite delightful and thoroughly unpretentious: the night I was there, the service was carried out by an effortlessly cheerful beauty who might have stepped, it was suggested, from one of Milos Forman's early films.

The best of the dishes was boiled beef in a thick, though fairly light, sauce of dill and cream; the portion served on the far side of generosity. Both this and roast duck are served



with bread dumplings made with cubes of different sorts of bread fused into a cylinder and boiled. It is served in thick, circular slices and the Czech Club's version is not in the least leaden. Nor is the sweet dough dumpling with apricot and melted butter that is served as dessert - this was one of the best hot puddings I've tasted for ages.

Other things worth trying are braised with raw onion, and slices of fried bread spread

with strong liver pâté and garlic. The only questionable mark was against the sweet, mushy sauce that accompanied the duck. We drank Budweiser - the Czech not the American brew - and one apricot brandy and paid the grand sum of £26.

Ziani could hardly be more different. It looks like any one of a dozen or more off-the-peg Italian places in Chelsea - one that pretends to be tiles, abstractist aberrations and scenes of Venice on the walls,

tables so close you can smell your neighbour's breath, cocky waiters with higher degrees in body language. But where Ziani differs from the common run is in the friendly efficiency of the cocky waiters and in its successful offering of a number of dishes common enough in Northern Italy but too rarely found here.

Bollito misto is the great cold weather standby of Piedmont, where it originated, and of Lombardy and the Veneto. It comprises tongue, boiled beef and veal, steamed capoes, celery, carrot, the sausage called cotichetta, firm potatoes; the sauce is a turbot-charged vinaigrette with capers, parsley, garlic. The dish was well executed, and there was lots of it.

More commonly encountered dishes are prepared with uncommon care and fine supplies - steaks are of properly hung meat and char-grilled; the prosciutto does not taste of salty soap. The brief wine list is, for the most part, needlessly modest, for there is currently available in this

country an astonishing selection of Italian wines at decent prices. The most interesting here are the 1979 Cesari Amarone from Valpolicella and the 1981 Castello di Nipozzano, a chianti from outside Chianti, which is certainly odder and maybe better than many of those within the denomination.

The fact that the place was packed on one of the coldest nights of this cold year testifies to its worth. It also means that you are liable to be asked to move tables in order that the house can accommodate yet another party of pla-striped loudmouths. Two are unlikely to pay less than £40 and, given the range of obscure aperitifs and digestifs, may well pay more.

Jonathan Meades

Czech Club, 74 West End Lane NW6 (open Tues to Fri, 6pm-9.30pm, and Sat and Sun, 9am-3pm and 6pm-9.30pm). Ziani, 45 Radnor Walk SW3 (01-361 5297 and 01-362 2698, open every day noon-2.45pm and 7pm-11.30pm).

IN THE GARDEN

For the first time there is a company with enough money, muscle and commitment to put a decent range of organic products, not merely into a few specialist outlets, but into popular stores and garden centre chains.

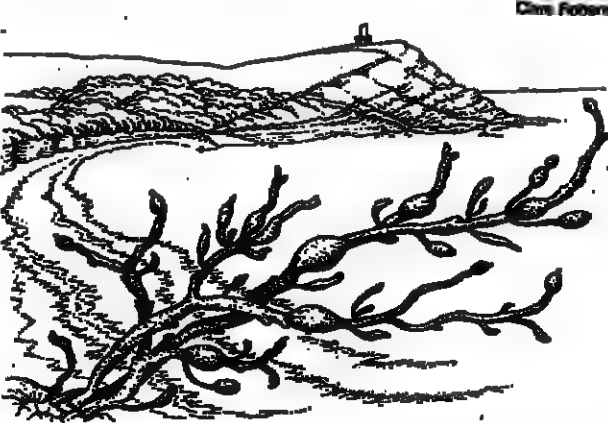
An unproclaimed but horticulturally significant merger has just brought together Maxicrop, famous for its horticultural seaweed extract, and the Simgro Company, producers of organic compost, under the umbrella of a giant Swedish firm which, by its own account, takes an interest in ecology and conservation. A family business, Maxicrop is already the biggest exporter of seaweed extract. Although the benefits of seaweed have been known for 2,000 years, its use is still fairly limited, partly because of the sheer bulk of natural seaweed.

The Maxicrop initiative was almost an accident, owing its origins to a research project set up during the Second World War to make camouflage netting from seaweed. It failed in its main purpose, but the chief scientist (who was

Fertile fruits of a war failure

also a gardener) discovered that the precipitate obtained from the seaweed proved an exceptional tonic for his plants. Most importantly, nearly all the goodness of seaweed could be refined into this strong liquid concentrate.

In the early 1950s a small Maxicrop company was set up and did moderately well until 1978, when it went into receivership. Paul Ridgeon, son of the original director, bought the company, believ-



ing its fortunes could be reversed with better manufacturing, marketing and research.

Under his direction, the harvesting of seaweed, principally the species *Asophyllum nodosum*, is now carried out by a machine rather than by hand, which, as I can vouch, is a long and arduous business. It is a cool-water, inter-tidal seaweed which grows best in sheltered rocky bays and is a genuinely

renewable resource. The fronds are cut one foot from the holdfast, which anchors the seaweed to the rocks, and grow again within a few years.

Scientific interest in the effect of seaweed on plant life and on soil structure has developed over the past decade. Maxicrop itself has financed research fellowships. It has been established that seedlings sprayed with dilute seaweed extract grow more strongly and have better root development. Not only do seaweeds contain trace elements but also a group of plant hormones known as cytokinins, which enable plants to take nutrients from the soil more rapidly, and

WEEKEND TIPS

● Even if there is a thaw in your area, indoor bulbs which have finished flowering should not be put outside straight away - give them a halfway house in a cold frame or cool greenhouse.

● Check your stored apples to make sure they are not freezing. If they are, do not let them thaw completely but cut and cook them as soon as you can get a knife through, after which they can be stored in the freezer.

efficiently. Seaweed-treated plants also have considerable resistance to pests and diseases, although the reason for this has not yet been completely explained.

During the past few years, I have used dried seaweed on the worst clays in my garden and while I would not claim to have been scientific, there is no doubt that these beds are easily worked and fertile. Experimental work shows that the alginates (which make living seaweed slippery) bind soil particles together to give a stable, crumb-like structure, and this happens effectively in sands as well as clays.

Francesca Greenoak

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THE ARTS

Murder most finely drawn

Indelible Evidence (BBC2) got off to a shaky start last week, largely because the true-life case which it lightly fictionalized was still fresh in the viewer's mind. Last night's reconstruction of a 1981 double murder was altogether more gripping.

Peter Hugo Daly's eerily convincing performance as a shambling psychotic, who made himself an orphan with the help of two hacksaws, inspired the Hampshire Constabulary to equal heights of authenticity. "When did you last see your father?" has never been uttered with a straighter face.

Topping and tailing the drama, Ludovic Kennedy bids fair to become the Edgar Lustgarten of the age of

TELEVISION

forensic omniscience and if this series dissuades research-happy crime writers from committing the perfect murder on their own account it will have served its purpose.

One half of *Arena* (also BBC2) followed the 71-year-old thriller writer, Celia Fremlin on her nocturnal wanderings through London, the potential danger of which she finds "tremendously invigorating". Solitude is the one condition that the television documentary cannot adequately convey, and it was left to the subject's voice-over to provide the human interest - notably in her story of encountering a fantastically obese woman who for years had taken her exercise only at night, and who was incensed at having been seen by another human being.

The other half of the programme celebrated the daily round of Jeffrey Bernard, the romantic realist and part-time tourist attraction whose *Low Life* column in the *Spectator* is unique in English journalism. While Miss Fremlin was preparing for sleep, Bernard was injecting himself with insulin and lubricating his typewriter with the first vodka of the morning.

These days, the erstwhile Colonel Maud of *Private Eye* has his main drink of the day at lunchtime, maintaining vertical bold in his corner of The Coach and Horses, and retiring gracefully in the early evening, when his beloved Soho falls prey to those he despises.

This was all rather poignant, and it needed the archive footage of Muriel Belcher presiding over The Colony Room to give an indication of what - still, and against the odds - makes Bernard tick.

Martin Cropper

● This summer's Glyndebourne Festival opens on Sunday, May 24, with a new production by Sir Peter Hall of *La Traviata*, with Marie McLaughlin in the title role. This is the first time Verdi's opera has been heard at the Sussex theatre. *Traviata* will be designed by John Gunter and conducted by Bernard Haitink.

The season's other new production comprises a Ravel double bill of *L'Heure espagnole* and *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, conducted by Simon Rattle and directed by Frank Corsaro. The first night is July 22.



Christopher Leach: Teaching half-filled minds for too long is very bad

Christopher Leach, whose latest novel was published this week, talks to Caroline Moorehead

Faith of a faithless man

Some time this afternoon, as he does every Saturday afternoon, Christopher Leach will go into Knutsford, south of Manchester, to collect the papers. Besides three dailies and the complete range of Sunday papers, he reads *The Spectator*, *The Times Educational Supplement*, *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Listener* - papers, as he puts it, being his one vice.

Neither he nor his wife drive, so the two-mile journey from their stone farmhouse to the centre of town will be done by taxi. The only other time Leach sits from home is on a Monday, the day he regularly lunches, with a friend, from noon till three.

There has been nothing untoward about this past week, either, despite the publication on Thursday of his 12th novel, *God, Sparta and Miss Emily*. A tall, (6ft 4in), big sandy, man, with pale blue eyes surprisingly sharp in the soft face, he has a distinctly watchful manner. He talks about himself with precision, rather as though he was describing someone else.

Until two and a half years ago, Christopher Leach was an arts teacher at a nearby private school. He had been teaching boys to paint ever since he was demobbed from the Army in 1945, but strictly as a way of earning a living. "Teaching half-filled minds for too long," he says, "is very bad; it leads to trivialities and a terrible schoolmasterly manner."

His talent as a painter had been spotted by a civil servant in the

Ministry of Education who, having the Services for possible post-war teachers, had come across him serving with the Royal Engineers in Cairo, and invited him to come home, to teach at a training college, then art school.

That offer marked his life. He hated the army - "all that stuff about the suppression of the individual" - as much as he had hated school during his childhood in the East End of London. Until his marriage at the age of 35 he lived on his own, in the bedsit of Earl's Court, moving every two years from school to school, dreaming of the colours of faraway places - "can you imagine, for an East End, what those colours had meant?" - and when he failed to get back to them writing a novel about them instead, called *The Wheel*. This became so successful that writing, not painting, became the focus of his life. He wrote at night, fuelled by cups of tea.

The style, if not the intensity, of his work has scarcely altered with successive books and growing popularity, particularly in Japan and America. He rises, as he always has, at six, and cooks himself a large breakfast. At nine he moves into his study, a room he likens to an operating theatre for its extreme cleanliness and order, and opens *The Children of Pride*, a collection of letters from the American Civil War, written on 1,050 pages of rice-paper. From this he reads, every day, one letter, "to distance myself from my surroundings."

Between nine and one he writes, throwing away sheet after sheet of paper (the best quality, a second

extravagance), until each page he completes is perfect. There is no re-writing. "Once I am into it it is like a tape unspooling."

In the afternoon he listens to music - Mahler, Debussy, Ravel - and reads - Hemingway, Salinger, Scott Fitzgerald, what he calls the "gutsy" American novelists, and biographies.

Does he, perhaps, from time to time garden? "No, no, I never touch it." See friends? "No, very little." Take holidays? He seemed surprised. "No, I've never taken a holiday." Travel? He hesitates. "Well, I have been asked to go to Boston, because the university is collecting my papers."

Four of Leach's novels are set in America and though reviewers have found them so convincing they have tended to assume he is American, he has never actually been there. Could that mean a trip with his wife? "Um. Would it sound awful if I said I would rather go alone?"

Leach has always had a reputation for being a loner: he adds that he also hates possessions. "I wouldn't be sad to part with anything. Inside, I have a quietly contemptuous me looking at things I have gathered as being trivial and temporary. I love beginnings. What I like about life is the potentiality of beginnings."

On February 2, 1979, Christopher Leach's carefully-constructed routine was abruptly smashed when his 11-year-old son, Jonathan, died of asthma. Leach's response was to write about it. *Letter To My Son*, an attempt to

make himself understand and bear what had happened, won much critical praise. He told, almost dispassionately, the story of a cross television interviewer asking him whether it was written for the money. "I wrote it because I thought it might illuminate things and try to make it better for other parents who had no religion."

Did it make it better for him? "It was my way of dealing with it. When I saw him dead I thought: 'There is nothing there. It's a dead container.' The silence that follows someone's death is so profound." The Leaches have another son, Martin, 18, and now at college.

Ten months after Jonathan's death, Leach was writing that he was "trying to find an equilibrium". To judge from his productivity he would seem to have found one. But his sharp blue eyes still seem to look out on a bleak world from a great distance.

He talks fluently of his atheism, and his hope that he will write a book about how "a person without faith lives in a world that has no concern for the individual". Of his rich imaginary life, which makes what goes on inside his mind more real than what he sees around him: of his wish that one day he will have enough money not to have to work at such a relentless pace.

Since Jonathan's death, he says, "everything is heightened: like the stiffness on that cup of coffee. It happens when you think you won't see it for ever." Has his son's death made him fearful? "No. I like stoicism, the thought that you can come to terms with yourself even if everything is taken from you."

Shining Mahler in the dark

ECO/Tate
Queen Elizabeth
Hall

In its enthusiasm for a new means of stage presentation, the South Bank management looks to be in danger of threatening the Queen Elizabeth Hall's concert facility. Not only does the built-up stage overlap a dozen rows of what used to be seats and look a mess, it significantly affects the acoustic properties when ensemble tone is squeezed between raised floor and overhead canopy.

The lighting at present is also hardly to anybody's advantage, least of all the soloist with the English Chamber Orchestra on Thursday night. Thomas Allen had to sing Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* with his face almost entirely in shadow, while the text in the programme was virtually unreadable beyond the first few rows.

CONCERTS

Musically, however, it was a performance to challenge memories of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, different in character but by no means so in achievement. Where his German colleague was more self-tortured, Allen sang of loneliness and unrequited love with open and disarming candour. His interpretation suggested that Mahler was most himself in those songs for which he also wrote the poems: emotions are directly expressed rather than quoted.

Now completing his second year as the ECO's principal conductor, Jeffrey Tate brought the experience of his earlier work with singers to Mahler's benefit in relating voice to orchestra.

The composer's two *Wunderhorn* songs that began the concert's second half, however, were not as contrasted as they might have been had the

doomed drummer-boy of one not been made to sound almost jaunty in contemplation of his fate.

The concert began with Mozart's E-flat Symphony (No 39) that seemed propelled by the weight of its downbeats.

Even so, it was not without grace in the phrasing and became amiably relaxed in the lyrical passages. But in the finale there was often a lack of clear articulation among the strings.

Such a charge could not be laid at the reduced number (20) of players involved in *Verklarte Nacht* as Schoenberg expanded it from his string sextet version.

Nevertheless, he still calls on exposed solo writing at moments of intensity, and while this was finely sustained for the most part, some extra fluidity would have been welcome to generate more emotional heat.

Noel Goodwin

Charge of the heavy brigade

LPO/Eschenbach
Festival Hall

Surveying the awesome assembly for this concert - eight horns, eight percussionists, six trumpets, Festival Hall organ on red-alert and string sections topped up to match - some spectators might have wondered whether the proposed merger between the London Philharmonic Orchestra and one of its rivals had already been realized. Clinched in the tea-break during rehearsal, perhaps.

But no; there were a mere 111 players here, whereas total membership for the projected super-band is clearly understood to be set at 135 persons. This programme may have sounded noisy, but imagine what an difference those 24 reinforcements will make.

Nevertheless, if Arts Council grants were awarded according to who plays the most number of loud endings in one season (and, for all I know, they are) this concert will stand the LPO in excellent stead, as it seemed to be constructed according to a unique principle. Each piece began in a tender whisper, then became progressively tumultuous, until no more decibels remained to be squeezed from straining sinew or bursting lung.

Unfortunately, such entertainments follow the law of diminishing returns. So while one could thoroughly enjoy Christoph Eschenbach's patient and sumptuous build-up of the Prelude and Liebestod from Wagner's *Tristan*, and admire his brave attempt to be totally ecstatic about Scriabin's preposterously overblown *Poem of*

Ecstasy, it was difficult to keep patience with the procession of Ravel, in intellectually degenerating order, that followed.

The second suite of *Daphnis et Chloé* at least gave the LPO's stylish principal flute, Jonathan Snowden, the opportunity to display some exquisite, full-bodied tone. But *La Valse* seemed to grind on like a geriatric carousel, and this was succeeded (as if the symbolic disintegration of the entire Habsburg empire was not climax enough) by a performance of *Bohème* in which the solo side-drummer was given a place of honour alongside the conductor's podium. I would have preferred to watch a soaked Spanish dancer in full flow, but perhaps she is one of those 24 reinforcements.

Richard Morrison

A Yankee doodle dandy

THEATRE

Three Men
on a Horse
Cottesloe

From O'Neill downwards, pre-war American drama of men poshies from European models. The great exception is farce, a gloriously indigenous growth which (apart from *The Front Page*) remains virtually unexplored over here.

It is largely the creation of George Abbott who, in various partnerships, produced a string of his pioneering a combination of farce and melodrama, establishing a comic playground on the verge of the criminal underworld subsequently internationalized by Damon Runyon.

As a slightly premature salute to Abbott's 100th birthday, Jonathan Lynn's National Theatre Group offer an expert revival of this 1935 collaboration with John Cecil Holm: a footproof comic mechanism which Sam Shephard later parodied in *Geography of a Horse Dreamer*.

One can understand why the play appealed to Shephard, as it deals not only with horse-racing but also with magic deriving from the fairytale role that magicians are not entitled to work any spells on their own behalf. The magician in this case is Erwin Trowbridge, a meek writer of greetings card jingles who happens to be able to foretell the day's winners.

Beset by a skintight employer, a free-spending wife and an overbearing brother-in-law, Erwin never considers using his gift to escape. "The fun," he says, "would only take effect when he wanders miserably drunk into a bar and falls into the loving clutches of three professional gamblers."

The pleasure that Abbott and Holm extract from this



Save bet: Geoffrey Hutchings, Desmond Barrit and Cyril Shaps in *Three Men on a Horse*

situation depends on their grip on an artificial world which is at once ruthless and innocent. For instance, Erwin is far more concerned with completing his assignment of 67 verses for Mothers Day than in foretelling what is going to win the 2.30.

The authors milk that for cross-purpose gags and then go on to show the crooks being moved almost to tears by Erwin's latest maternal *trouville*. As with all good farce, the play combines limitless inventive possibilities with a sense of inevitable direction,

which shows everyone being debauched by the prospect of unearned wealth with the exception of Erwin, who only longs to get back to work and knock his brother-in-law's block off.

Played in a toy-theatre box set, papered with outside dollar bills (designs by Saul Radomsky), the production is stylistically in the same league as Richard Eyre's *Guns and Dolls*. The hint of real violence, both in the domestic bullying and in Ken Stott's performance as the gang leader, anchors the piece in actual-

ity and supplies a springboard into the comedy of soft-hearted sentiment.

Geoffrey Hutchings seizes on Erwin's total passivity as the clue to the role and achieves delicious comedy by sitting back, almost as a spectator of the frantic activity he has unleashed. Of course, it helps that the frenzy has been choreographed and reved-up to match the recurring accompaniment - "Tiger Rag" arranged as a Palais Royale gallop. A great night out.

Irving Wardle

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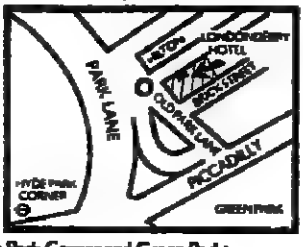
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THE WEEK AHEAD



CONCERTS

SON OF POLAND: Arthur Rubinstein, the great Polish pianist who was born 100 years ago tomorrow, is remembered with a centenary concert attended by his widow and the Princess of Wales. The single work is the British premiere of Krzysztof Penderecki's *Polish Requiem*, conducted by the composer. It was written to commemorate the 1943 uprising by the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, and the shooting of shipyard workers in Gdansk in 1970. Royal Festival Hall, (01-928 8800), tomorrow, 7.30pm.



THEATRE

WANTON WIFE: Helen Mirren, an actress of power and presence, is soon to be seen in the film of Paul Theroux's novel, *The Mosquito Coast*. But meanwhile she returns to the stage to play the title role in *Madame Bovary*. This is the world premiere of a new play by Edna O'Brien based on the Flaubert novel about a woman of passion married to a dull provincial doctor. Michael Byrne, currently in the TV serial, *A Sort of Innocence*, is Charles Bovary. Palace Theatre, Watford (0923 25671), from Thursday.



TELEVISION

OLD FLAME: Bob Peck, who gave an unforgettable performance as the anguished hero of *Edge of Darkness*, plays Parker, an Oxford don who relives a childhood infatuation, in *After Pilkington* by Simon Gray. Miranda Richardson is Penny, the childhood sweetheart who comes back into Parker's life with disturbing results for both of them. Produced by Kenneth Trodd and directed by Christopher Morahan. *After Pilkington* is Gray's first television screenplay for more than five years. BBC2, tomorrow, 10.10-11.45pm.



OPERA

TOSCA UPDATED: Josephine Barrow sings the title role in the new Jonathan Miller *Tosca* for the English National Opera, which was first performed at last year's Maggio Musicale in Florence. In sets by Stefanos Lazaridis which suggest a post-war Italian film, the production updates the opera to Nazi-occupied Rome in 1944. Jan Latham-Koenig makes his house debut in the part. Nell Howlett is the Scarpia and Eduardo Alvarez the Cavaradossi. London Coliseum (01-836 3161), Wednesday and January 31, 7.30pm.



RADIO

ON THE SPIKE: Spike Milligan has been a surprisingly infrequent visitor to radio since the glorious days of *The Goon Show*, and that finished as long ago as 1960. Surprising, because no one has explored the conventions of radio to greater comic effect. But now he is back with his own six-part series, *The Milligan Papers*, promising more mould-breaking humour in the company of Chris Langham, the writer John Antrobus and the musician George Chisholm. Radio 4, Wednesday, 6.30-7pm.



FILMS ON TV

ALPHA RAYS: Nicholas Ray, the cinema's poet of passion and pain, has a well-deserved season on BBC2. It starts today when his first film, *They Live By Night* (1948), a bitter-sweet study of love on the run, is intriguingly shown in tandem with the 1973 Robert Altman re-make, *Thieves Like Us* (9.55pm-1.30am). This afternoon there are showings of Ray's 1957 war film, *Bitter Victory* (2.15-3.55pm) and *Wind Across the Everglades* (4.15-5.45pm). Treats to come include his astonishing baroque Western, *Johnny Guitar*.

CONCERTS

STRAVINSKY/ORFF: The Young Musicians' Symphony Orchestra brings these two ill-assorted composers together with performances of the former's *Rite of Spring*, the latter's *Carmina Burana*. Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (01-928 3191) Today, 7.30pm.

MOZART/MAHLER: The veteran Rudolph Skerif solos in Mozart's Piano Concerto K451 and Claudio Abbado conducts the LSO in Mahler's Symphony No. 9. Barbican Centre, Silk St, London EC2 (01-628 8795) Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

MAHLER/MAZEL: Lorin Maazel conducts the Chamber Orchestra of Europe in Mozart's Symphonies Nos 25 and 41 "Jupiter". Arleen Auger sings Mozart concert arias, Gidon Kremer solos in Mozart's Violin Concerto K219. Festival Hall, Tues, 7.30pm.

MAHLER/MOZART: The LSO is again conducted by Claudio Abbado in Mahler's Symphony No. 9, and Jean-Louis Steuermann solos in Mozart's Piano Concerto K453. Barbican Centre, Tues, 7.45pm.

FRENCH RARITIES: A rare chance to hear Chausson's delightful Concerto for Piano, Violin and String Quartet is offered by Ian Brown, Isabella Perrotian and the Media Quartet. The latter also plays a still greater rarity, d'Indy's Quartet No. 3. Wigmore Hall, 36 Wigmore Street, London W1 (01-9352141), Wed, 7.30pm.

BEETHOVEN/ZUKERMAN: Given with the small-scale ECO, Pinchas Zukerman's account of Beethoven's Violin Concerto should be more intimate than most. He also conducts Schubert's Symphony No. 8 "Unfinished". Festival Hall, Thurs, 7.30pm.

RADIO

THE MILLER'S REEL: David Hayman and Phyllis Logan in "a love story for radio" compiled from the songs and letters of Robert Burns. Radio 4, tomorrow, 7.15-8pm.

THE TWO WORLDS OF JOSEPH RACE: An engrossing portrait by Steve Race of his remarkable Victorian grandfather, a Durham miner who became a Methodist minister and went on to be a missionary in China. Radio 4, Tues, 8.30-9.15pm.

BLUES WITH A DIFFERENCE: Kingsley Amis indulges a lifetime passion for jazz by assessing the achievement of half a dozen greats, starting with Bix Beiderbecke. Radio 3, Wed, 12.30-1pm.

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD: Aun Lewis talks to experts about the future of the motor car and asks the £4,000 dollar question: will more electronics guarantee better reliability? Radio 4, Wed, 8.15-9pm.

FILMS

OPENINGS

ESCALIER C (15): A cynical, misanthropic art critic gets his comeuppance, partly thanks to his apartment building neighbours. Based on a prize-winning novel by Elvire Murat; directed, uncertainly, by Jean-Charles Tacchella, best-known for *Cousin Cousine*. With Robin Renucci. Cannon Premiere (01-439 4470), Cannon Baker Street (01-935 9772), from Fri.

BOY SOLDIER (15): A private in the Welsh Guards is charged with murder following a shooting incident while on patrol in Northern Ireland. An earnest drama from the director of *Giro City*, Karl Francis, with screen newcomer Richard Lynch; filmed partly in Welsh. Metro (01-437 0757), from Fri.

SELECTED

THE NAME OF THE ROSE (18): Simplified edition of Umberto Eco's medieval murder mystery, filmed with a fine sense of atmosphere and a grotesque carnival of characters. Directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud; with Sean Connery. Cannon Haymarket (01-939 1527).

SALVADOR (18): Vivid political drama set in Central America.

GALLERIES

OPENINGS

INTERNATIONAL SILVER AND JEWELLERY FAIR: 38 dealers congregate to sell dazzling wares, old and new. There is also a loan exhibition of jewels presented to the nation through the National Art Collections Fund. The Dorchester, Park Lane, London W1 (01-734 5491). From Friday to Monday.

ERIC RAVILIOUS: Fascinating exhibition showing the wide range of his activities as a painter, illustrator and designer for pottery and glassware, before his early death while working as a war artist. Crafts Council Gallery, 12 Waterloo Place, London SW1 (01-830 4811). From Wed.

JEAN-MAIRE TOULQUAET: Impressionistic paintings of gardens stylistically reminiscent of Monet, who was a relative of this artist. Francis Kyle Gallery, 9 Maddox Street, London W1 (01-499 6870). From Mon.

ROCK

TIMBUK 3: The husband and wife duo from Austin, Texas, who have secured a Top 20 hit in America with "The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades", play a witty combination of folk, country and rock. The barbox makes three. Tonight, Dingwalls, London NW1 (01-267 4967).



● **Elvis Costello**, the eulogistic singer-songwriter, following his sell-out shows in December. Out go *The Attractions* and in come *The Confederates* and the musicians featured on *King of America* (James Burton, Jerry Scheff, Jim Keltner and Beaumont Newhall). Mon, Tues, Wed, Royal Albert Hall, London SW7 (01-589 8212); Fri, Manchester, Apollo (061 273 3775).

THE DOTTED LINE: Despite the foolish objections of some participants, this week-long showcase will give two dozen unsigned groups a real opportunity to secure a recording contract, and the rest of us a chance to consider the latest stirrings from the seedbed of rock. Four bands on each of six nights. From Monday, ICA, London SW1 (01-930 3647).

DAVE EDMUNDS: A rare assessment by one of the old school R & B auteurs. Tonight, Town and Country Club, London NW5 (01-257 3334).

THE BAND OF HOLY JOY: The Deptford quartet use everything but the kitchen sink to create a cacophonous re-interpretation of the English folk tradition. They sound like a Salvation Army band with the drinking habits of The Pogues. Tomorrow, Albany Empire, London SE8 (01-691 3333); Fri, Princess Charlotte, Leicester (0533 553595).

JAZZ

THE LEADERS: Formidable post-modernist all-star sextet spearheaded by the trumpet ironist Lester Bowie, the swinging altoist Arthur Blythe and the thoughtful tenorist Chico Freeman. Tonight and Mon to Sat, Ronnie Scott's Club, 47 Fri St, London W1 (01-439 0747).

DON LUSHER SEKTET: Rare club appearance by the one-time trombone star of the Ted Heath band. Tonight, Pizza Express, 10 Dean Street, London W1 (01-439 9722).

HUMAN CHAIN: Eclectic duo by Loose Tubers Django Bates and Steve Argüelles. Tonight, Gardner Centre, Brighton (0273 685861); Thurs, Band on the Wall, Manchester (061 834 5109).

TEDDY EDWARDS: Veteran tenorist who cut his teeth in the Los Angeles bebop wars. Mon, Liberty's, Birmingham (021 501 2020); Thurs, Corner House, Newcastle (091 253 0091); Wed, Leadmill Arts Centre, Sheffield (0742754500); Thurs, Hippo, Nottingham (0602 506667); Fri, Queen's Hotel, Cheltenham (0242 523690).

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THE GOLDEN THREAD: Group show of younger artists including Edward Allington and Christopher Lohm who use elements of classical mythology in their work. Exhibition Gallery, 555 Silbury Boulevard, Milton Keynes (0908 805539).

STATE OF THE ART: An exhibition relating to a six-part series on Channel 4 (tomorrow, 8.15pm) addressing the issues and precursors of international contemporary art. Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London SW1 (01-930 0493).

MASQUERADING: Touring show of elaborate, decorative masks and costumes worn at recent Notting Hill Carnival. Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton (0902 24548).

JOHN LATHAM: Early constructions, made between 1954 and 1972, mostly from

second-hand books, by a formerly influential artist. Lisson Gallery, 68-68 Bell Street, London NW1 (01-724 2739).

ROGER NILTON: 20 late drawings by a much underrated St Ives school painter, who died in 1975. New Art Centre, 41 Sloane Street, London SW1 (01-235 5844).

WILLIAM DANIEL (1789-1837): Landscape acquitments made during this artist's Voyage Round Great Britain, between 1813 and 1823. The Scottish Gallery, 94 George Street, Edinburgh (031-225 5955).

FILMS ON TV

CHATEAUVALLON: The French answer to *Dallas* and *Dynasty*, a glossy soap opera set around an 18th century chateau. Each of the 26 episodes to be shown twice, dubbed into English on Mondays (Channel 4, 8.30-9.30pm) and with French subtitles on Wednesdays (Channel 4, 5-6pm).

RELATIVE STRANGERS: New series of the lovable sitcom starring Matthew Kelly and Mark Farmer as a carefree father and his long-lost teenage son. The policy this time is more characterization and fewer gags. Channel 4, Mon, 9.30-10pm.

STRUGGLE FOR STONEBRIDGE: Forty Minutes film by Franco Rosso (director of *Babylon*) on how black self-hate has defused a potential race explosion on a high-rise estate in Brent. BBC2, Thurs, 9.30-10.10pm.

AM I RIGHT OR AM I RIGHT?: In the wake of *The Singing Detective*, the most discussed television programme of 1986, an extended interview with the author, Dennis Potter. Though you would not always guess it from his work, Potter declares himself to be an optimist. BBC2, Fri, 9.30-10.30pm.

LOOKING THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: Explores the relationship between the pre-Raphaelite movement and the development of photography. Work by Cameron, Rossetti and Lewis Carroll. Birmingham City Museum,

© DACS 1987



Conductor, composer and artist: Gemadi Rozhdzestvensky and (right) Picasso's view of Igor Stravinsky, drawn in 1917

Stravinsky and his peers

In 1962 Igor Stravinsky, one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, made a triumphant return to his native Russia. He was by then an American citizen who had openly criticized the Soviet approach to art. The Russian authorities, in turn, had attacked the modern music which Stravinsky personified. But the old animosities were soon buried. Among the musicians Stravinsky met in Moscow was a young conductor, Gemadi Rozhdzestvensky. It was a coming together of master and disciple. Rozhdzestvensky later became familiar to British audiences as chief conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and now he is back in London directing a festival called "Stravinsky Plus" at the Barbican.

Rozhdzestvensky compares Stravinsky to Picasso, seeing them linked by the diversity of their work, their constant striving for perfection and the essentially national character of their art. "In every Stravinsky score one can hear Russian musical speech, the speech of Musorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov. But Stravinsky's appeal and influence

were international - and "Stravinsky Plus" reflects this. At its heart are six London Symphony Orchestra concerts, conducted by Rozhdzestvensky, which take key years in Stravinsky's life and put a major work of his beside a major work written by another composer in the same year. On Thursday 1910 is represented by Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Elgar's Violin Concerto, with Ida Haendel. On February 1 Stravinsky's *Petrushka* - dating from 1911 - is alongside Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*, with Rozhdzestvensky's wife, Viktoria Postnikova, playing Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 1. On February 8 we reach 1913, which juxtaposes the refinements of Debussy's *Images* with the barbarities of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. On February 12 Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* (1918) is joined by Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, while on February 15 Gershwin's *Gigi* (1928) is a gem that contains Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto* (with Salvatore Accardo) and *Bolshoi's Feast* by Walton, all dating from 1931. Finally, as nominees for 1945, Shostakovich's Symphony No 9

meets Stravinsky's Symphony in Three Movements, to which is added the ironic *Ebony* Concerto, composed for Woody Herman's band.

Supporting the concerts is an exhibition - "Dearest Bubushkin" (Vera Stravinsky's pet name for her husband) - of pictures and documents that form a detailed record of the composer's life. There are video shows, among them Tony Palmer's three-hour documentary of 1982, a film of Balanchine and Stravinsky discussing *Apollon Musagete* and Simon Rattle analyzing and conducting the Symphony in Three Movements.

Further visual pleasures include "Russian Style 1700-1929: Court and Country Dress from the Hermitage", a selection of costumes and uniforms from the mass of items kept in store in Leningrad, rarely seen by the Russian public and never before shown in the West. They will be in the Barbican Art Gallery until April.

Max Harrison
Stravinsky Plus is at the Barbican Centre, London EC2 (01-638 4141) from Thursday.

CHAMBERLAIN SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM (021 236 2839).

ARTHUR TRESS: Retrospective for innovative American Tress whose early period was much influenced by Eugene Smith. Later work slips into surreal, tasteless eroticism. Impressions Gallery, 17 Colliergate, York (0804 54724).

HOMETOWN: 100 years of photography in Salford drawn from the archives and local history collections of the city. Salford Graphic Centre, Vulcan House, The Crescent, Salford (061 737 1040).

THEATRE

● **Nicholas McAuliffe** stars as *Kate* in the RSC's first American musical, Cole Porter's 1948 Broadway hit *Kiss Me, Kate*, inspired by *The Taming of the Shrew*. With Paul Jessel, Tim Flavin and Fiona Hendley. Adrian Noble directs. Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford (0789 259523). Previews Fri, Feb 2-7, 9. First night Feb 10. Until Mar 7. Transfers to the Old Vic, London, in May after a tour.

SCOTTISH OPERA: Tuss is the first night of a new production by John Cox of *Der Fliegende Holländer*. Theatre Royal, Glasgow (041 351 1234).

OPERA 88: Britain's lively young touring company with new productions of *Rigoletto* and *Cinderella*. Tonight, *Cinderella* at the Wyvern Theatre, Swindon (0793 24481); during the week at Weston-Super-Mare's Playhouse (0534 23521). *Rigoletto* on Mon and Wed, with *Cinderella* on Tues. Then on to St Austell Coliseum (0726 614004) for *Cinderella* on Fri and *Rigoletto* on Sat. All performances start at 7.30pm.

PHOTOGRAPHY

LOOKING THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: Explores the relationship between the pre-Raphaelite movement and the development of photography. Work by Cameron, Rossetti and Lewis Carroll. Birmingham City Museum,

OPENINGS

FALLEN: Carol Pluckrose performs a "dramatic treatment" of the Kerry Babies case about a young unmarried mother whose child dies at birth and who is suspected of having murdered it. Drill Hall Arts Centre, 18 Chancery Street, London WC1 (01-637 8270). Opens Tues.

FROZEN ASSETS: Barrie Keefe has revised and updated his 1978 study of a Borstal runaway who has accidentally killed a warder. Half Moon, 213 Mile End Road, London E1 (01-790 4000). Previews Tues, Wed, Opens Thurs. The play is also on Radio 3, Fri, 7.30-9.15pm.

HANCOCK'S FINEST HOUR: Colin Bennett's new comedy features Jim McManus as Tony Hancock with real-life Hancock collaborator Alec Bregonzi. Boulevard, Walkers Court, London W1 (01-437 2661). Opens Mon.

SELECTED

TWELFTH NIGHT: A radiant, richly inventive production by the touring Cheek by Jowl company, with Patricia Kynman, an enchanting Viola. Alternates weekly with *The Cid*, also excellent. Donmar Warehouse (01-240 8230).

THE AMERICAN CLOCK: Arthur Miller's magnificent spectacle of America struggling through the Depression. National (01-928 2252).

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR: Peter Jeffrey plays Falstaff in plus-fours in the welcome return of the RSC's spiv-and-teddy-boy production. Short on magic but full of apt visual jokes. Barbican (01-628 8795).

BREAKING THE CODE: Riveting performance by Derek Jacobi as the enigmatic Turing, computer genius and homosexual. Haymarket (01-930 9832).

WHEN I WAS A GIRL, I USED TO SCREAM AND SHOUT: Two adolescent girls eagerly

BOOKINGS

FIRST CHANCE

LONDON FESTIVAL BALLET: Postal booking opens Monday for two programmes - world premiere of Christopher Bruce's *The Dream is Over*, based on John Lennon, and Alvin Ailey's jazz ballet *Native Creative*, with music by Duke Ellington, plus London premieres of works by Michael Clark, Kevin Hagen, and Ulysses Dove. Personal phone booking from February 6. April 21-25 Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 (01-278 8916).

LAST CHANCE

AUGUSTE RODIN: Major exhibition of drawings and sculpture, with work in terracotta, plaster, bronzes, marbles, photos and etchings. Ends tomorrow. Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London SE1 (01-261 0127).

DIE FLEDERMAUS: Last performance (Thurs) of Tom Hawkes' production, with Valerie Masterson, Fiona Kimm, and Christopher Booth-Jones. English National Opera, London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (01-636 3161).

For ticket availability, performance and opening times, telephone the numbers listed. Bookings: Anne Whitehouse; Concerts: Max Harrison; Dance: John Percival; Films: Geoff Brown; Television, Radio and Film on TV: Peter Waymark; Galleries: David Lee; Jazz: Richard Williams; Opera: Hilary Finch; Photography: Michael Young; Rock: David Sinclair; Theatre: Tony Patrick and Jeremy Kingston.

OUT OF TOWN

BRISTOL: Fifth of July: British premiere of a Broadway success by Lanford Wilson, about a double amputee veteran of the Vietnam War. Old Vic Theatre Royal (0272 243888). Previews Wed and Thurs. Opens Fri.

CARDIFF: Premier of latest show by Lumiere & Son, a six-woman piece which "mercilessly dissects modern life". Created by Hilary Westlake. Chapter (0222 398061). Opens Chapter (0222 398061).

MANCHESTER: A Wholly Healthy Glasgow: Comedy set in a Glasgow health club, by new writer Iain MacKenzie. Playwright Competition. Royal Exchange (061 833 9833). Preview Wed. Opens Thurs.

BRIGHTON: The New Revue Tour: Rowan Atkinson begins an 11-theatre tour with his comedy revue, written by Richard Curtis, Ben Elton and Atkinson himself. Theatre Royal (0783 28488). Opens Thurs. Then at Oxford (from Feb 3) and Wimbledon (Feb 10).

DANCE

SURAYA HILAL: A further chance to see her programme of traditional Egyptian dances and modern treatments of the same technique, in collaboration with the Layell El-Sharg ensemble of musicians. Bloomers Theatre (01-387 9525), Sun.

SCOTTISH BALLET: Peter Darrell's *Cinderella*, to Rossini music, is at Aberdeen today and Hull Tues Jan 27. His *Macbeth*, to John Macfarlane (0224 641122). New Theatre, Hull (0482 20463).

NORTHERN BALLET: Theatre: Robert de Warren's *Cinderella*, to John Strauss music, is at Cardiff from Tues Jan 27. New Theatre, Cardiff (0222 394322).

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DIE FLEDERMAUS: Last performance (Thurs) of Tom Hawkes' production, with Valerie Masterson, Fiona Kimm, and Christopher Booth-Jones. English National Opera, London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (01-636 3161).

LAST CHANCE

AUGUSTE RODIN: Major exhibition of drawings and sculpture, with work in terracotta, plaster, bronzes, marbles, photos and etchings. Ends tomorrow. Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London SE1 (01-261 0127).

SPORTING DIARY

Simon Barnes

Broad view of openers

England's success in the Test series just concluded depended in no small measure on the solid opening partnerships of Athey and Broad, and I have been wondering how they rate alongside the game's immortals. Paul Fry, architect at Methodist College, Belfast, has the answer: they are England's ninth most successful openers against Australia. Fry has added together the runs scored at the fall of the first wicket and divided it by the number of innings the pair opened (excluding unbroken partnerships). Fry says the exercise is of doubtful validity, since it takes no account of the pitch or the strength of the bowling. He points out that Hurton and Washbrook could not quite average 30, but they had to face Lindwall and Miller. The table, based on a minimum of five innings, reads: 1. Hobbs and Sutcliffe, 29.11; 2. Sutcliffe and Walters, 23.13; 3. Boycott and Luckhurst, 17.17; 4. Hobbs and Rhodes, 18.32; 5. MacLaren and Hayward, 13.15; 6. Richardson and Cowdrey, 8.17; 7. Boycott and Barber, 11.24; 8. Boycott and Edrich, 15.16; 9. Broad and Athey, 9.23; 10. Fry.

Non-persons

Anyone who knows anything about football would agree that the Soviet Union produced one of the finest sides in the last World Cup, even if they didn't win much. The players were almost all from Dinamo Kiev and produced some wonderful stuff. You might think it odd, then, that the official World Cup film, *Hero*, contains not a frame of the Soviets. This is interpreted as a wholly commercial move by the international football federation, FIFA, whose prime aim in making the film, it would seem, is making money in the West. Excellence is irrelevant.



Barry Fantoni

Super plus

No one is pretending that the heavy whiff of commerce is irrelevant to the Superbowl, the American football final that takes place in Pasadena tomorrow. The match will be watched in 45 per cent of all American households, a bigger audience than any other programme in the year. The price for advertising during the innumerable commercial breaks taken by the players is a non-negotiable \$1.2 million per minute. Five years ago a minute cost a mere \$690,000. The most expensive ticket is \$75. But Superbowl tickets are not so much a way to see a football game as a medium for speculation. It's easy to get \$800 for a ticket; not impossible to get \$1,500. Giants are favourites at around 4-1 on and Broncos are 3-1. You can bet on anything - the longest kick-off, who will miss the first field goal, the points scored in each quarter, even the result of the toss.

● The big story of the week before the Superbowl is that Jim Burt of the Giants very nearly got one of his colleagues booked for a traffic offence. Such is the quality of news coming from this occasion.

Bath salts

As the wondrous excitement of the America's Cup continues to fire us all with waves of total indifference, a remark overheard in Fremantle sums it up: "It's just like playing with boats in the bath - except that billionaires can afford bigger boats and bigger baths than most."

Scrumptious

The best quote of the winter comes from Jonathan Davies, a Welsh rugby international who, in a fit of honesty for which the game is not famous, has said he would consider any sensible six-figure offer to join the professional code of rugby league. "I have a great dream about life," he said. "I would like one day to own a nice big house." The dreamer added: "With some land, as security for my family." "Security for my family" is sports-talk for pots and pots of money.

Well-heeled

As the weather continues on its ghastly way, now is the time to buy the wellies that the outdoor sporting person has always promised himself. "They are the best wellingtons it is possible to buy," the supplier tells me. "You can spend all day in them. They have a lip, are lined with chamois leather and are a snap at £110."

Phones: get that digital in

Jonathan Miller finds not only the strikers to blame for BT's present disruption

When engineers at the American Telephone and Telegraph Company went on strike for 26 days last year, there were delays in getting new equipment installed, but on the whole few people noticed. In Britain, one week into the industrial action called by the National Communications Union, the evidence suggests that the telephone service has noticeably deteriorated. More calls are failing to get through. The City, Britain's largest foreign currency earner, is threatened. Even emergency services are in jeopardy.

As the strike continues, the situation is likely to worsen rapidly. Up to a quarter of a million telephone lines a week are expected to go out of service in the absence of routine maintenance. It is too facile to blame a handful of labour militants for using their power to hold the country to ransom. The union is not responsible for the technical vulnerability of the service. The blame must fall on British Telecom itself, and its government patron, for allowing the basic telephone system to remain firmly rooted in obsolete technology.

The roots of the trouble can be traced back at least 20 years, when new generations of electronic switching equipment started to be introduced in the US, France and other countries. All recognized that the key to modern telecommunications lies in the efficiency of the central telephone exchanges to which subscribers are

connected. The realization was followed by an intensive programme to replace mechanical exchanges with computerized, "digital" switching equipment.

These switches are expensive to install, but once they have been they require almost no maintenance, fewer staff, and there are dramatic real reductions in the cost of providing service. They permit much faster connection of calls and the support of a host of new services, such as itemized billing of long-distance calls.

Britain, however, has been slower to implement this technological leap forward. The clanking mechanical systems familiar to pre-war telephone engineers still predominate in our exchanges. Calls still click through with maddening slowness. Up to 12 per cent of all long-distance calls fail or provide unsatisfactory quality. With itemized telephone bills available to only a few thousand of British Telecom's 22 million customers, quarterly statements must be taken on faith.

British Telecom now claims to recognize the problem, but its response leaves much to be desired. Although it is spending nearly £1 billion a year in a belated effort to modernize, there is evidence that this sum is hardly making a dent in the problem.

Only about five per cent of Britain's telephones are connected to the most advanced types of digital exchanges. In France, by contrast, more than 50 per cent of the system has been digitalized.

In the United States, telephone subscribers have access to a host of value-added services, including call forwarding and abbreviated speed dialling. Computer data can be transmitted routinely over ordinary telephone lines at a speed of 9,600 bits of information per second. In Britain, speeds of 1,200 bits per second are considered the norm.

In France, by the end of this year, every telephone subscriber will be able to receive, free, a miniature computer terminal with which to look up telephone numbers and gain access to hundreds of information services. In Britain, calls to directory inquiries are all too often met by an engaged signal.

People who have not lived in France, the US or Japan are hardly aware of British Telecom's miserable standard. The government ought to know better. But for years, when the Post Office was responsible for the telephone system, its borrowing power was restricted, limiting its ability to invest in new equipment. Even when investment belatedly be-

came available there were delays in modernizing the network. Instead of ordering off-the-shelf exchanges available from abroad, British Telecom insisted on a made-in-Britain solution, ostensibly to protect British industry.

The result of this protectionism was self-defeating. As GEC and Plessey struggled at the time to produce a modern exchange that actually worked, the British telephone network continued to decay.

The government's answer has been to privatize the operation, and introduce competition. But privatization has done little more than turn an inefficient and underinvested government corporation into a similarly inept public one.

The introduction of competition has been equally ineffective in bringing change. Mercury Communications, the sole competitor to British Telecom, still has only a handful of customers, and is making no effort to market its service to any but the largest users of telephone services.

As the strike continues, and the telephone service goes from its normally poor standard to something worse, it would be timely for Whitehall to launch an inquiry into the state of the system.

If this results in British Telecom being sold to speed up its modernization programme, to put the entire country on to digital exchanges within, say, five years, the National Communications Union will have done everyone a favour.

Dieter Buhl considers the outlook for West Germany after tomorrow's election

Tedium today - but watch out for sparks



There has been no real contest from the start. Rarely has a challenger looked weaker than the ragged and disunited Social Democrats. The problems that were supposed to have been over and done with after it lost power more than four years ago actually came to a head in election year. The Social Democrats have quarrelled about where they were going and who they should be following.

They also suffer from the same problems as the British Labour Party or the Democrats in the US: their programme has not sufficiently reflected the change from an industrial to a service society. They have appealed principally to a blue collar workforce in sharp decline and have ignored the relatively selfless, upwardly mobile people in the service sector.

Even the SPD's choice of so

well-liked a vote winner as Johannes Rau as their candidate has not helped very much. Rau has twice won an absolute majority of votes in his native North Rhine-Westphalia, the nation's most populous state. But aside from his integrity, humour and rhetorical talents, he has not had much to offer. But the wit with which he has fought his hopeless battle is appreciated: Germans don't usually have much to laugh at in politics.

With a divided party behind him, Rau has not been able to offer a convincing programme. He has even had difficulties in getting across his two main points - a firm commitment to Nato and a firm No to a coalition with the Greens - which are not accepted by all SPD supporters. A substantial number of his colleagues would like more flexibility in East-

West relations or they are pinning their hopes on cooperating with the Greens.

The prospect of a Red and Green coalition in Bonn, however, holds little attraction for Germans. Most believe that it would lead to the chaos that the conservatives have been warning against. Such a worrying scenario does indeed carry conviction. For while the Social Democrats suffer from disorder, the Green movement simply exists. It is the Greens' idea of basic democracy presents solutions which a democracy even more mature than the German could hardly survive. To call for less industrialization (on environmental grounds) and oppose technological innovation, but to call at the same time for higher spending on social services, is to demand the impossible.

Today's Greens are described by the dictum which Thomas Mann once applied to all Germans: "As a people they are tragic, mythical, heroic but not political." Given this competition, it has been easy for the government to appear a bastion of good sense. Even Helmut Kohl has not been able to undermine its position, though his comparison between Gorbachev and Goebbels and his remark about concentration camps in East Germany left doubts about his wisdom. Franz Josef Strauss, leader of the Bavarian CSU and the second most powerful man in the conservative camp, is not known either as a champion of restraint or moderation. Both have appealed to an attitude of mind from which a chubby-faced nationalism and a new teutonic arrogance could easily grow.

Despite occasional derailments, however, the government can claim to be on the right track. As this image will very probably be rewarded in the polling booths tomorrow, the Christian Democrats' campaign call takes on a special meaning. They have appealed to the voters to "say yes to the future." But they left open the sort of future they were aiming for, so there is much room for speculation.

Past German leaders foretold great times for their people; the results we know only too well. Their present successors in Bonn promise quieter times. But what chance have they of keeping their promise? With many economic indicators worsening, public concern over the kidnapping of two West Germans in Beirut and the prospect of a tussle for power between the CDU, the Bavarian CSU and the Free Democrats, a victorious coalition faces plenty of problems. What happens in Bonn after the election, therefore, could make the campaign look even more boring in retrospect than it actually was. The author writes on German politics for Die Zeit.

Let Channel 4 flow free

Channel 4, intended to reach the parts the other TV networks don't, has been a remarkable success since it was launched in November 1982. Its weekly average of viewers is 7 to 8 per cent, sometimes rising to between 9 and 10 per cent. Tilted somewhat to the left in its current affairs at the beginning, it now has a reasonable balance, taking one programme with another. Its extended news from 11pm at 7pm is a blessing for those who want more than they get from ITV and the BBC.

On culture it has been excellent, and its coverage of live racing is valuable to punters and bookmakers. Its broadcasts for ethnic minorities have been laudable, though proving a pleasing point: they are seen only by some 300,000, suggesting that the great bulk of the non-white population prefers assimilation by watching what everyone else does to accentuation of their separateness.

Originally, the ITV companies strongly opposed Channel 4 because they had to fund it by subscriptions. Its success has steadily diminished the burden, until it is now trifling. In the year to the end of March, the ITV companies will subscribe just on £136 million plus another £20 to £25 million for transmission costs. But advertising attributable to Channel 4, for which the ITV companies get the cash, is running at £120 million a year, and rising. As the gap of around £40 million between the cost of Channel 4 and its attributable advertising revenue is chargeable against levy and tax, the finances of the ITV companies are barely affected.

Professor Alan Budd of the London Business School reported last October that if Channel 4 time were sold by the ITV companies at the same rate per thousand viewers as the rest of ITV time, Channel 4's revenue would already be greater than what it receives in subscriptions from the ITV companies. The prospects are that advertising intended for Channel 4 will grow substantially. It has two advantages over the other ITV companies in that it is national, whereas they are regional, and has a distinctive upmarket flavour.

Edmund Dell, the chairman of Channel 4, is in favour of ending its dependence on the ITV companies. It might be supposed that they would be delighted at being relieved of this unwanted baby. Not at all. Their cost of the baby's upkeep after relief from tax and levy payable to the Treasury is substantially passed on to the taxpayer, but the praise of the ITV companies' public spirited behaviour lingers on. It is a useful amulet to ward off those who

think that the monopoly power of the ITV companies should be broken and that their franchises should not be awarded on subjective judgments on programme quality but on the brutal dictates of the market place. The highest bidders would get the licences.

They would still have state monopolies but at least the state would get more money for them. It might then be possible to end the levy system based on profits rather than turnover. Currently the levy chargeable is 45 per cent of profits, a system which offers an inducement to careless spending. That is why the ITV companies are overmanned by overpaid staff, particularly on the filming side. This puts pressure on the BBC to pay higher wages for its equivalent staff, which it is less able to do now that its subsidy from the licence payer has been index-linked.

Another reason for the ITV companies wanting to continue their funding of Channel 4 is that at the moment they sell to Channel 4 one third of its output, thus making the financial burden of sustaining it even less. If Channel 4 was independent this agreeable source of revenue would be at risk.

Under the Act which set up Channel 4 it has legal obligations to cater for minority and specialized interests. The ITV companies argue that if it were independent there would be an irresistible temptation to go down market to capture their audiences and those of the BBC. But there is no reason why an independent Channel 4 should not have precisely the same legal obligations as today. Moreover, its strength lies in being equivalent to the quality papers in its appeal to audiences and advertisers.

Some powerfully placed in Channel 4 fear bottom and prefer the cosy arrangement by which, whatever happens in the untidy world outside, their income is assured. But they only have that cosy arrangement because it was assumed wrongly by many that Channel 4 could never pay for itself, whereas in a few years its growing advertising revenue could make it a handsome profit.

It must be in the spirit of the Thatcher government's idea to create another voice that, now that Channel 4 is able to do without help or pressure from the ITV companies, it should be set free from ownership by the Independent Broadcasting Authority, either as an ordinary profit-making company or as a statutory organization analogous to the Toys, which has no shareholders. This makes substantial profits. Why not put that in the next Conservative manifesto?

Michael Kinsley

It runneth over, it runneth out

New York The American obsession with Australia is about to peak with the America's Cup competition, in which two of the world's most ostentatiously anti-snob societies are locked in national combat over a yachting trophy.

Australia strikes the American visitor as the American dream come true: a prosperous and yet virtually classless society. Australia's per-capita income of \$10,000 (£6,600) is close enough to America's of about \$12,000, and there is far less wretched poverty or great wealth. When you consider that the sunshine and the beaches are free, it's hard not to agree with the sentiment cited by Donald Horne in his 1964 book, *The Lucky Country*: "In the pursuit of happiness for ordinary people, Australians believe they are already ahead of America."

It was not always thus. By the 1830s, writes Robert Hughes in *The Fatal Shore*, his new book about Australia's early days, "Australia was as class-obsessed a society as any in the world." Fifty years after its founding as a dump for Britain's criminal refuse, it wanted respectability. The "exclusives" (British officers who had become large landowners) looked down on the "sterling" (free immigrants) who looked down on the "currency" (native-born offspring of convicts) who looked down on the prisoners.

Hughes, writing in *Vanity Fair*, denies that today's Australia is truly egalitarian. (What self-respecting intellectual could admit such a thing about his own society?) He says Australia's style is fraternal and resists the glorification of celebrities. "No Australian politician could surround himself with the trappings of recent American presidencies, the manipulation of imagery... and hope to get elected."

What's intriguing for the American is that Australia's bourgeois Utopia of liberty, equality, fraternity and prosperity was achieved unself-consciously, without any prevailing ideology or national founding myth to help it along. Quite the reverse, in fact. Hughes writes: "The late 18th century abounded in schemes of social goodness... But here, the process was to be reversed: not Rousseau's natural man moving in moral grace amid free social contracts, but man coerced, exiled, deracinated, in chains."

age of Americans whose ancestors arrived in chains as slaves is probably not too different from the percentage of Australians whose ancestors arrived in chains. But we Americans take our myths seriously. It's strange to reflect that in Australia there are no Pilgrim fathers, no Declaration of Independence, no Chief Justice (like our own Warren Burger) urging cereal companies to print the Constitution on their boxes in honour of its 200th anniversary. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," says the American Declaration of Independence. Australians hold these truths to be so self-evident that they never even wrote them down. Yet in some ways today their nation is more American than America.

The experts explain Australian society as British working-class culture grown warm and fat in the tropical sunshine. So what happens when the easy prosperity on which the egalitarian spirit rests starts to fade? Donald Horne noted more than two decades ago that "a nation more concerned with styles of life than with achievement" had created "a social climate largely inimical to... the desire for excellence (except in sport) and in which there is less and less acclamation of hard work."

Today, many Australians complain that the egalitarian spirit actually threatens the nation's prosperity by creating an "anti-success attitude" that sneers at entrepreneurship and hard work. In a world where natural resources matter less and human organization matters more, bountiful Australia - even more than bountiful America - finds itself being approached and surpassed by crowded, barren nations like Japan, Taiwan, and Singapore.

The country's leading historian, Manning Clark, has described the national attitude that emerged from the gold fields a century ago: "If you could not work, you were of no use, and would infallibly sink in the social rank in a society in which physical activity and industry were made the highest standards of a man's ability for getting on in the world."

Yet a generation or two in the Lucky Country seems to sap these juices, even more than a generation or two in the land of the free and home of the brave saps the juices of young Americans in the eyes of immigrant grandfathers. The America's Cup may be a race between two lucky countries whose luck is running out.

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Perdition: killed by its blatant lie

Barbara Amiel challenges the Royal Court's reason for cancelling its Holocaust play

After the cancellation of *Perdition*, Royal Court artistic director Max Stafford-Clark said the theatre did not accept that it was inaccurate or anti-Semitic; only that it would cause great distress to "sections of the community."

This statement angered those members of the Royal Court board and Jewish leaders who had opposed the play. *Perdition* argues that Hungarian Zionists collaborated with the Nazis on the grounds that the more awful the massacre of the Jews, the better the chances of establishment of the State of Israel. The play's author, Trotskyist Jim Allen, went even further in interviews, saying that all over Europe "Jews were massacred because their leaders covered up for the Nazis."

Just how accurate such general accusations are may be judged from the fact that historian Martin Gilbert was able to compile a list of 60 errors of fact, some of which were in the best tradition of the *Der Stürmer* school of Jew-baiting. One scene, for instance, has Jews waiting to be deported, lying in a field listening to the sounds of a party being given by the Jewish Council for the SS.

This is based upon a famous incident in Skaled, Galicia, in which the Jewish Council was rounded up and ordered to give names of other Jews for deporta-

tion. The entire Jewish Council refused and was shot. A second level of Jewish elders was also rounded up and shot when they refused to collaborate. Eventually, a handful of Jews were forced by threats to their families to reveal the whereabouts of other Jews and then compelled to attend a party given by the SS. The play reduces this tragic incident to a grim accusation of celebration, omitting all details of Jewish heroism.

There is, of course, no respectable debate over the absurd idea that Jews collaborated with the Nazis in effecting the Holocaust. The Nazis had no need of Jewish help in this matter, and insofar as some Jews may have "co-operated", it would have been for a piece of sausage for their families rather than for the existence of the State of Israel.

All the same, opponents of the play conscientiously dissected the distortions of *Perdition* and waited for an apology. What they got was Stafford-Clark's statement standing by the play's accuracy, and giving implicit support to the idea in the next day's newspaper headlines that the Jewish lobby had "banned" the play.

What does it mean to stand by a play's integrity? If major errors of fact and interpretation in a play pretending to historical accuracy have been pointed out by qualified critics, surely two courses only are open to its author and supporters. Either they can effectively refute the criticisms with chapter and verse of their own, or they can retract their accusations the play contains. Mr Allen and Mr Stafford-Clark have done neither of these things. They are therefore "standing by" vile accusations they cannot sustain - essentially the position of the libeller.

Still, this should not perhaps have surprised anyone. People when attacked will defend themselves. It is a natural instinct to be as false in the defence of a lie as in the original lie. It was not likely to occur to Mr Stafford-Clark at this late date that the fact that some people on the Royal Court board who objected to the play were Jews was utterly beside the point. He could not be expected to see the obvious point that a civil rights protest cannot be denigrated because it happens to include Negroes.

Anti-Semitism, of course, like

any other kind of racism or tribalism, cuts across all political lines. But unlike the plain ordinary Right-wing or middle-of-the-road anti-Semite, the Left-wing anti-Semite would be in grave difficulties without the State of Israel on which to vent his spleen. Their Left-wing religion would forbid them to express anti-Semitism by anything but anti-Zionist statements. Whether this is true of *Perdition* or whether it belongs to a cruder tradition would perhaps require a closer reading of the play than most people will be able to obtain since it is now unobtainable from the Royal Court Theatre. "It doesn't exist," says their press office.

Those of us who have a deep ingrained dislike of censorship would have been most offended to see government action under Hate-Literature legislation used against the play in order to ban it. All one can do is point out errors and calumnies whenever they appear loudly and clearly. As for the future of the play, supported *Perdition*, let them take the consequences of their actions. That is not up to theatre critics or commentators or special interest groups, but those who in the normal course of events would decide administrative matters at the Royal Court Theatre.



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JUSTIFICATION BY UNITY

Not everyone will be easily persuaded that the Reformation, one of the greatest upheavals in European history, was only a misunderstanding about the use of certain words. The history books record, with varying emphases, that the disagreements were real enough at the time for Christians to spill blood over them. The Reformation was that dangerous combination: a theological difference with immense political and social overtones. The difference became a dispute, and the dispute a conflict.

It has happened often enough since, and still happens today; but not any more, except perhaps in Ireland, in a Christian context. Politically speaking, the embers of the Reformation are dead ones. What remains as its memorial is the debilitating division of the Christian religion into separate camps.

The Ecumenical Movement is the modern attempt to overcome those differences, and if it is to be successful it will have to happen at every level, from the parish to the papacy, at the level of reason and at the level of emotion. Both poles are well illustrated this week.

The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes ordinary members of one church into the unfamiliar territory of another, to bring — under the banner of a warm-hearted inter-denominational trust — Baptists into Anglican pulpits and Catholics into Methodist ones. And the publication of a new joint theological statement by the Second Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission, a new "substantial agreement" no less significant than his predecessors, is an appropriate reminder that local good will is not enough, and ecumenism needs work with the head as well as with the heart.

It is the verdict of that commission that the Reformation was indeed a misunderstanding — no doubt fostered by ill-will and vested interests on both sides — about certain key words and concepts at the centre of Christianity: self-knowledge, Luther's epistemology.

ation of justification by faith alone was meant, initially, as a protest at certain mediaeval Catholic practices which seemed to encourage the faithful the hope that they could save their own souls by merit, rather than relying on the freely given mercy of God. But Luther soon built his protest into an assault on the whole papal edifice, which he saw as irredeemably anchored in heretical beliefs, of which its promotion of "salvation by good works" was just a part, albeit the root of the trouble.

Catholicism was no tolerator of such insults, and responded with its own ruthless Counter-Reformation of persuasion and persecution. But it responded internally too, the Council of Trent adopting a surprisingly self-critical spirit on at least some of the points the Reformers were shouting about — without admitting, of course, that they had any right to shout. But the verdict of history had been written by then: Catholicism and Protestantism were irreconcilable, being opposing views each of which eliminated the other.

It is a mark of the work of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission that it has never been prepared to accept historians' judgments as decisive on theological disputes, nor to allow itself to fall in thrall to popular prejudice. It has done what it hardly seemed to occur to anyone to do before, to check such fixed conclusions against the facts. It is able to do so because each theological tradition has at last become accessible to the other in an atmosphere free from point scoring. Protestant scholars can explore the decrees of Trent without fear or favour, and Catholics the writings of Luther and his contemporaries.

The latest statement is the fruit of what they have found, partly rooted through the ear-then work of an American inter-church study, the Roman Catholic-Lutheran Consultation of 1983, which was itself indirectly derived from pioneering work by the Ger-

man theologian Hans Küng. And what they have found is that in the theological speculations of the Reformation the Protestants were relying on Greek, the Catholics on Latin. For the former were attempting a fresh examination of the New Testament in its early sources, and the latter were working within the scholastic framework of mediaeval theology.

Out of this emerged two usages for similar concepts, justification and sanctification, but no common ground as to the boundary between them. Whether these two aspects of the process of salvation are cause and effect, or whether they proceed in parallel may imply different doctrines of grace and salvation — or it may imply that these terms are being given different shades of meaning. The commission concludes that Reformation theologians were too busy with winning the quarrel to notice the disparities in concept and language. In any event they were quickly committed to the opinion that their opponents were malicious heretics, incapable of speaking the truth anyway. Where there is no trust, there can be no understanding.

The exact formularies the commission has chosen to express its discovery of this common faith will be subject to close scrutiny by experts and by persistent partisans, but the fact of an agreement is what matters. The dispute between Luther and Trent has a sense of remoteness to it; and the theology of justification is no longer a central issue in any church.

Symbolically, it will be enough for the world to note that a mixed collection of cautious theologians, each bringing their inherited denominational suppositions with them to the conference table, have found nothing important to disagree about any more, once they truly understood each other. And that should be enough to bury the Reformation's principle theological hatchet, once and for all. This year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has something to celebrate.

TAKING THE TEMPERATURE

The latest opinion poll will give Labour new heart while introducing a note of caution into any assessment of the Government's election prospects. After a month in which the Conservatives have enjoyed a lead over Labour in the polls of between one and five per cent, yesterday's Gallup poll in the *Daily Telegraph* put Labour five points ahead.

Government apologists will be quick to dismiss the result as unrepresentative of the underlying trend. So it may be. An average of recent polls is usually more reliable than a single result, and on average recent polls have been consistently in the Government's favour.

Nevertheless, the result does underline the fragility of the Conservative lead. Although the Government appears so far to have escaped any serious fall-out from the Guinness scandal, it would not take a lot to erode a lead of only a few points. A few false moves in an election campaign could easily destroy it. And the more volatile the results of the polls, the more difficult it is to divine their underlying message.

Yesterday's reaction in the foreign exchange market also

underlines the Government's vulnerability on sterling. As soon as details of the poll became known, dealers in the Far East marked the pound down sharply. In London sterling opened lower against both the Mark and the dollar. Later there was some recovery as dealers reassessed the poll's significance, but the extent of the reaction was a sharp reminder of the political influences on sterling in the present pre-election period.

Currency traders are prepared to forgive the Government a good deal so long as they think it will win the election. Higher public spending, a consumer credit boom, the money supply overshooting its various targets — all seem to be acceptable to overseas holders of sterling, perhaps even desirable, if they increase the chances of re-election for the Tories. Labour's expansionary policies are seen as dedicatedly inflationist. If Mrs Thatcher's policies prove to be imprudent, however, the market is confident that the Tories would tighten policy again (once safely re-elected).

But the reaction to the possibility of Mrs Thatcher's

defeat raises a spectre for the Tories. Might not a malign spiral develop in which a setback in the polls undermines the pound, and the fall in the pound undermines confidence in the Government, which further undermines the pound, and so on? The effect of polls on the outcome of elections is already controversial. Foreign exchange markets could amplify the influence of the pollsters still further.

It is far from clear, however, that it is in Labour's interests for this kind of spiral to develop. While any nervousness on foreign exchanges underlines the increased likelihood that Labour will win, it also dramatizes the unsoundness of Labour's economic policies in the eyes of the world.

The Government may be seen as having the major responsibility for the currency. But the implied comment on Labour's policies is scarcely complimentary. The argument advanced by Mr Hattersley that the economy is heading for perdition under its present management could backfire if he were to draw attention to the foreign exchange market's view of Labour's own policies.

FOURTH LEADER

The French Government has announced that a new tax is to be imposed, on matches and cigarette-lighters. At first sight, there seems nothing especially out of the ordinary about the proposal. Governments of all countries must constantly be seeking new ways of getting their hands into the taxpayers' pockets, and such familiar objects as matches and cigarette-lighters — the former sold in tens of millions, the latter, though not so ubiquitously used, substantial numbers — seem reasonably ripe for taxing. In fact, we were not planning to give the news a second thought, when our eye fell upon the reason given by our friends across the Channel: figure to yourself, my small cabbage, that the tax is to be introduced in "an attempt to combat thousands of forest fires that devastate the south of France each summer".

We yield to none in our admiration of the French people as comprising the su-

premiely rational nation. And we truly sympathise with them when we learn that many of their beautiful trees have been destroyed in fires. But trying, in this instance, to match the cause to the effect, we confess that after a time we became positively dizzy.

Economists tell us (have you ever noticed that economists tell us only things we already know?) that any tax will have the effect of lessening the number of purchases of the goods or services taxed. No doubt the French will now buy fewer matches and cigarette-lighters. But is it seriously suggested that virtually the entire country will give up the means of making fire, so that no forest can be set ablaze because there will be nothing to start the conflagration?

Prometheus, get off that rock: you have urgent business in France. Or to put it another way, where is Descartes now that he is really needed? We

have all heard of the primitive tribe which believes that the waving of the trees causes the wind; but we never suspected that the tribe in question was the French. After all, the tax on a box of matches can only be a few centimes, which will not deter even the poorest smoker; a lighter, which in its most primitive form might cost perhaps twenty francs, could bear a heavier burden, but all that would happen if it were obliged to do so is that the users of lighters would switch to matches, which might be good news for the revenue, but hardly for the fire-brigades of Provence.

Whatever next? A tax on newspapers, to reduce the incidence of eye-strain? A tax on walls, to deter the scribbles of graffiti? A tax on boots, to end the menace of corns? Stay: what about a swingeing tax on Ministers of Finance and Chancellors of the Exchequer, to discourage the introduction of daft new taxes?

Brain death and transplants

From the Chairman of the Conference of Medical Royal Colleges and their Faculties in the UK
Sir, I have been asked by the Conference of Medical Royal Colleges and their Faculties to express our appreciation of the balanced way in which your leader of January 19 dealt with the problem of donor organs for transplantation. The various options discussed by you for increasing the supply of donor organs will be considered by our working party.

You are probably correct in your assumption that hospital staff often feel, and ask for permission to use organs of their dying patients. Nevertheless, we should not overlook the importance of public attitudes.

In 1980, the *Panorama* programme which questioned the criteria for brain death was followed by a decline in the number of available organs. Conversely, after the publicity given to the Ben Hardwick case there was a significant increase in organ donation.

As you say, reports continue to be published about doctors who have doubts about the criteria and the way they are applied. In view of the serious ethical and religious implications, the fact that some doctors beg to differ is not surprising.

The colleges have not treated this matter lightly. The criteria for brain death were first promulgated in 1976. They have been reviewed in 1979, 1981, 1983, and 1986 and we shall continue to keep them under review. The recent decision by the Conference of Colleges to reaffirm its support for the criteria was influenced by three points:

1. No new evidence has been adduced to cause us to amend the criteria.
2. Over 1,000 patients diagnosed as brain dead by these criteria have been maintained on life-support systems. In all cases the heart stopped, usually within 72 hours.
3. We have repeatedly asked our critics to produce evidence that any patient has survived after brain death has been established by these criteria; this they have failed to do.

I hope the public will accept this reassurance. Yours faithfully, RAYMOND HOFFENBERG, Chairman, Conference of Medical Royal Colleges and their Faculties in the UK, Royal College of Physicians of London, 11 St Andrews Place, Regent's Park, NW1, January 22.

No hedge against snow

From Mr R. M. Lang
Sir, Mrs Glyn, writing (January 21) about snowdrifts in Oxfordshire roads says that "Hedges would, of course, stop the snow well before the roads".

It's not as simple as that. If the hedge is on the side of the road from which the blizzard is blowing, its effect is to interrupt the aerodynamic flow and to create local turbulence. The disturbed airstream can then no longer support its load of snow, which drops on the lee side of the hedge, i.e., on to the road.

A better answer might be to plant a hedge 50 to 100 yards from the road on the weather side, but how many farmers could be persuaded to accept this?

Yours faithfully, MONTY LANG, 7 Townsend Lane, Almondsbury, Bristol, Avon, January 22.

Loans to doctors

From Mr A. J. Gunson
Sir, Mr Antony Newton, Minister for Health, is reported (January 19) to have asked the General Practice Finance Corporation to invite banks and building societies to contribute to loans to doctors.

A few insurance companies, including my own, offer such facilities already. During the past two years we alone have lent £14 million on surgery premises throughout the United Kingdom, some of which I would describe as being in inner-city areas.

From the lender's point of view the loan is normally made acceptable by the financing arrangements made between the health service and the doctor. Yours sincerely, ADRIAN GUNSON (Investment Manager), Norwich Union Insurance Group, PO Box No 4, Surrey Street, Norwich, Norfolk, January 21.

Koran in translation

From Mr Syed G. U. Syedain
Sir, As a Muslim who has lived in Western Europe for most of his life I was very disappointed to read Mr Philip Howard's recent article, "Muhammad of the paperback" (December 10).

To imply that "Western Europeans" find Buddhism "silly", certain sects of Christianity "mischievous and mad", and "Mohammedanism" "the most harmful and dangerous of the First Division monotheistic religions" is not only outrageous but truly offensive to me and my fellow Muslims, as well as to society in general.

It is difficult to understand how, in researching the background to this article, Mr Howard could have made the fundamental mistake of calling Islam

Furniture that looks the part

From the Chairman of English Heritage
Sir, Now that your Diary story (January 12) about furniture for Chiswick House has produced a comment (January 20) in your correspondence columns, perhaps I should explain the English Heritage position.

In presenting buildings and their contents to the public we aim at historical accuracy wherever that is possible. At Audley End, for instance, research has enabled us to put back furniture and pictures to the position which they occupied in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Where there are no historical records, properties in our care have occasionally been furnished with modern craft furniture designed to give scale and purpose to interiors, a better example being Kirkham House, Paignton. We intend to pursue this policy where possible.

At Chiswick House, much of the original furniture exists at Chisworth, but is not available to put back in the house. With the Duke of Devonshire's agreement we plan to have it copied, so that the rooms can be restored to their original appearance and thus increase the interest and enjoyment of visitors.

This will be equally correct but much less expensive than it would have been to buy William Kent furniture. I am glad to say that a most generous private donor from America has made it possible to start and continue the process. Yours faithfully, MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU, Chairman, English Heritage, Historic Buildings & Monuments Commission for England, Fort House, 23 Savile Row, W1, January 21.

From Mr John Mein
Sir, Chiswick House, "too small to live in but too large to hang on your watchchain", has long been the target of wit and the butt of modernists. Therefore it comes as no surprise that Mrs Manser (January 20) should advocate filling the lovely rooms of Inigo Jones and William Kent with "modern pieces" of furniture rather than classical reproductions favoured by English Heritage.

Chiswick House was designed by Lord Burlington (who so endearingly declared, "I did nothing except pay the bills") as a Palladian villa attached to his Jacobean mansion wherein to display his fabled collection of pictures and sculpture. Not, you may note, furniture: so nothing could be more ridiculous than placing modernistic objects in such a unique, classical ambience.

Yours faithfully, DAVID MELLOR, Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, SW1, January 22.

Pub-bombing cases

From the Minister of State, Home Office
Sir, Contrary to what Mr Robert Kee (feature, January 22) says in his campaign on behalf of those convicted in the Guildford and Woolwich and Maguire cases, the Home Secretary did not say or imply in the House of Commons on Tuesday that "he had no doubt about the rightness of the convictions". He was at pains to emphasise that it was not his function to second-guess the courts on the basis of evidence which they had already considered.

What he said was that he was satisfied that there was no new evidence or consideration of substance which had not been considered by the courts and which cast doubt on the safety of the convictions; and that, in those circumstances, it would be wrong for him to interfere in any way with the convictions.

There is no need for new evidence or a new consideration of substance but that, in any case, there were two new pieces of evidence. On the first point, the criterion which the Home Secretary applied

never intended? I would like to see it revert to the State at death and used where it is really needed — for disabled people in the community. I might add that the administrative cost of looking after these accounts is also very high. As far as health-care goes it is all dead money and wasted administrative effort.

If my authority is an average one, there could be £68 million lying idle and increasing each year which could be put to needy use. It should be.

Yours faithfully, BARBARA LYNDON SKEGGS, (Member, Northumberland Health Authority), Oakhall, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Northumberland, January 7.

they contain a great number of passages which extol women, make it obligatory to men to respect and honour them, and spell out their rights clearly. Not even Mr Howard can deny the great contributions which Islam has made to Western society in the past, which indeed it continues to do today. It has always preached peace and harmony and stands in sharp contrast to its aggressive attitude, which in my eyes forms a very real threat to the inter-cultural and inter-religious respect and understanding that have only just begun to build up.

Yours faithfully, S. G. U. SYEDAIN (Trustee, Wembley Mosque and Islamic Centre), The Pillars, 4 Davenham Avenue, Northwood, Middlesex, January 20.

Mrs Manser's suggestion, however, is not without relevance to the history of the house: at the turn of the century it was used as a lunatic asylum!

The upholstery beauty of Chiswick House charms everyone. Some years ago it was rented by the Royal Family as a "nursery residence" for the Dukes of Clarence and York, then convalescing. Their doctor was a local character named Lawrence, who one day saw them playing boisterously in the grounds. Their game stopped promptly at his approach, and the younger boy, destined to become George V, entreated him, "Oh Doctor, please say we are not well enough to travel so that we can stay in this lovely place, and not go to Sandringham".

Later, in 1928, when Chiswick House was under threat of demolition, King George V was among those who donated to save the house and grounds. Yours faithfully, JOHN MEIN, Laumer House, Church Street, W4, January 21.

From Mr Roy Hay
Sir, I was very interested in Mrs Manser's letter about the appropriate style of furniture for Chiswick House.

I owned a farmhouse, built in 1580, from 1953 until 1976. It was furnished with 20th-century beds, chairs, wardrobes, oak chests, dressing tables, tables, a settee, a sideboard, Parker Knoll chairs, with one or two antique items, mainly "Chinese", brought home by my late wife's parents.

It all looked very nice, we thought. If I had conceived it my duty to fill the house with genuine antiques or reproductions of same, what period should I have chosen? 1580 to 1680, 1680 to 1780, 1780 to 1880 or 1880 to 1953?

Is one to assume that successive owners of a house never brought in new furniture over the years or never changed the garden?

Yours faithfully, ROY HAY, Bulls Cross Cottage, 3 Bulls Cross, Enfield, Middlesex, January 20.

From Mr N. A. Oppenheim
Sir, The debate concerning the appropriateness or otherwise of equipping Chiswick House with reproduction furniture appears to have overlooked the fact that the building is itself a reproduction of one of Palladio's designs. Yours sincerely, NICHOLAS A. OPPENHEIM, 61 Park Road, Chiswick, W4, January 22.

in these cases is that which has guided all his predecessors. Without such a criterion a Home Secretary would rapidly be compelled to refer any case which attracted significant public attention, regardless of its merits. This would bring the whole system into disrepute.

On the second point, although Mr Kee draws a distinction between consideration of matters by the court of trial and the Court of Appeal, the fact remains that the Balcombe Street confessions were examined in detail by the Court of Appeal. The court concluded that there had been "a cunning and skilful attempt to deceive the court by putting forward false evidence".

As for the second piece of "new" evidence — scientific assessments of the Caterham and Guildford bombings — these simply focused on similarities between the two offences; they did not purport to prove that the offences were necessarily committed by the same people.

Yours sincerely, DAVID MELLOR, Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, SW1, January 22.

Benefit for disabled
From Mrs Barbara Lyndon Skeggs
Sir, John Major's letter (January 7) concerning improvements to benefits for severely disabled people living in the community is most welcome. These people and their carers deserve every possible help. However, does he realize there are people living in long-stay hospitals with every help at hand, receiving mobility allowances which in the main they cannot use?

My authority holds over £600,000 on behalf of patients unable to use their allowances and this money accumulates yearly, in high-interest deposit accounts, waiting to be handed in due course to next of kin. Is this good use of public money — waiting to be given to people for whom it was

ON THIS DAY

JANUARY 24 1836

Six years before the "curious narrative" below appeared in *The Globe* and *Emerald*, Edmund Keen (1787-1833) undertook an immensely successful tour of North America. In the intervening years, however, he had been cited as correspondent in a divorce case, as a result of which his wife left him and he was violently attacked by the public, both at home and abroad. The role of Richard III was one of those which had helped to establish his reputation as a great Shakespeare tragedian.

KEAN IN BOSTON

The following curious narrative is taken from a New York paper, dated Dec. 31, entitled *The Globe and Emerald*. From the rhodomontade style in which it is written, it is probably from Keen's own pen or dictation. Though it is impossible not to despise the mixture of meanness and bombast which distinguishes this theatrical worthy, yet the conduct of the Bostonians is utterly indefensible. His behaviour towards them on his former visit, and his canting letter on his last arrival, deserved some expressions of contempt; but none but fanatics and ruffians would have persecuted him to the risk of his life.

It is not probably known to our readers that Mr. Keen went to Boston at the suggestion of a gentleman of that city, who possesses influence and wealth, and at the solicitation of the managers of the Boston theatre. . . . Immediately after his arrival, the reader is aware that he published an address to the Boston people, which, if it is not remarkable for language too submissive and complimentary, is not remarkable for anything else. Confident that this address would propitiate the good-will, if not the affections, of his former adversaries, he appeared before the audience in citizen's clothes on the evening of Wednesday last. But it was then, ferocity unparalleled in the history of civilization commenced the yell of destruction. Missiles, brass balls, potatoes, bottles containing asafetida, apples, negro gingerbread, were thrown in showers on the stage. Mr. Keen now retired, and after the lapse of about five minutes, Mr. Kiner appeared, and in a loud voice, and with a placid countenance, stated that Mr. Keen wished to apologise, but not at the risk of his life. A silence ensued, and Mr. Keen again appeared, and when missiles were thrown in redoubled abundance, and with increased malevolence, and the victim finding that his life was really in jeopardy, withdrew, and the managers agreed that it would be madness in him to appear again on the stage. He retired into his dressing-room, and Mr. Kiner came forward with a placid countenance, stating that Mr. Keen declined to encounter again the deadly hostility manifested towards him, and asking if the play should proceed with Mr. Finn as the substitute in the part of Richard. A partial cessation of the tumult induced the managers to attempt to proceed with the performance, but at the end of the first act, finding that the disturbances still continued, and that a determination appeared to exist in a part of the audience, not to be satisfied whilst there was a hope of destroying Keen if he continued in the house, the play was discontinued at the desire of the most respectable portion of the audience, and Mr. Keen was hurried by his friends from his dressing-room to a house contiguous to the theatre, belonging to one of the performers. . . . The mayor was then sent for, who refused to attend, saying that the theatre was a place of public amusement, and as the managers made the bed, so they must lie on it. . . . By applying ladders to the windows, and forcing other entrances, thousands had by this time succeeded in storming the house and in rushing into the interior of the theatre; they immediately commenced the work of desolation. Loud yells were now made for Keen! Keen! and while the victim was in his retirement, he must have heard such expressions as the following from the mob: — "Pick him out!" — "There he is!" when they had followed some person whom they had mistaken for their object. . . . The inhuman monsters! We repeat, can the history of persecution, can Gothic annals, can African barbarity furnish an instance of such cruelty? . . .

From the inside
From Mr F. G. Dawson
Sir, Proposed legislative changes providing increased prison sentences for insider dealers, as reported in *The Times* today (January 19), contrast sharply with earlier methods of dealing with this venerable problem.

On September 30, 1826, *The Times* reported that the agent bank for the Chilean Government bond issue contracted in 1822 had announced that the dividend payment due October 1 would not be paid. Chilean bond quotations dropped abruptly.

As your Money Market correspondent reported, when the announcement was made a "fracas" erupted on the floor of the Stock Exchange. A broker (who was also a member of Parliament) was accused by a colleague of selling a large block of Chilean bonds prior to the announcement of the default when he must have known from his connections with the agent bank that they were valueless.

The charge was denied "in language the most direct and the least ceremonious". Cards were exchanged and a duel must have seemed likely. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and, your correspondent reported, "as the French phrase is, the affair had no result". Yours faithfully, FRANK GRIFFITH DAWSON, 3 Elusley Avenue, Cambridge, January 19.

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PART 2

THE TIMES

SATURDAY JANUARY 24 1987

Executive Editor
Kenneth Fleet

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1425.9 (+21.8)
FT-SE 100
1795.3 (+17.8)Bargains
43119 (36534)
USM (Datastream)
139.18 (+1.64)

THE POUND

US Dollar
1.5255 (-0.0095)
W German mark
2.7817 (-0.0036)
Trade-weighted
68.9 (-0.2)UEI talks
on merger
called off

Talks which might have led to a merger of UEI, an electronics and engineering group and Oxford Instruments, another expanding high-technology group, were called off yesterday.

Questions over the industrial logic of a merger were raised in the City when the talks were announced on Monday. Yesterday, Mr Peter Michael, the UEI chairman, said it was the pricing of the deal which was the main obstacle.

The implications of the breaking off of the talks sent UEI shares up ahead to 372p, but Oxford fell 12p to 419p, reflecting the questions which now hang over its profit performance.

Professor to
head review

The chairman of the committee to review the law on banking services is to be Professor Robert Jack of Glasgow University, it was announced yesterday in a press statement.

Other members of the committee are Mr Geoffrey Taylor, the retiring vice-chancellor of Middlesex University, and Mr John Gifford, a former partner of the law firm of Gifford, Rose, and Gifford.

HK issue

The Royal Bank of Scotland Group's Hong Kong subsidiary is planning a HK \$100 million (£8.4 million) certificate deposit issue, according to banking sources. The issue, the first by the group in Hong Kong, is expected to start in November 2, 1991.

Bid accepted

The board of Rine Cade Southern Cement has accepted the £100 million takeover offer by Boral.

No referrals

The Trade Secretary, Mr Paul Channon, has decided not to refer to the Monopolies Commission the proposed acquisition by Courtaulds of Fothergill & Harvey. The acquisition by Courtaulds of Fothergill & Harvey has also been cleared.

Thorn to move

Thorn EMI is to move its group headquarters to new, smaller premises off Hanover Square, London.

Cookson buys

Cookson is offering 117p a share in an agreed bid for Industrial Precision Castings, valuing the company at £5 million.

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MARKET SUMMARY

STOCK MARKETS			
New York	2170.58 (+24.88)	Dow Jones	2170.58 (+24.88)
Tokyo	1948.61 (+75.18)	Nikkei 225	1948.61 (+75.18)
Hong Kong	2498.43 (+37.51)	Hong Kong	2498.43 (+37.51)
Amsterdam	208.4 (+0.5)	Amsterdam	208.4 (+0.5)
Sydney	1599.6 (+4.9)	Sydney	1599.6 (+4.9)
Frankfurt	1012.3 (+6.9)	Frankfurt	1012.3 (+6.9)
Brussels	409.35 (+13.7)	Brussels	409.35 (+13.7)
Paris	425.3 (+8.5)	Paris	425.3 (+8.5)
Zurich	522.10 (+26.5)	Zurich	522.10 (+26.5)
London	1425.9 (+21.8)	London	1425.9 (+21.8)
FT 30 Share	1425.9 (+21.8)	FT 30 Share	1425.9 (+21.8)
FT 100	1795.3 (+17.8)	FT 100	1795.3 (+17.8)

INTEREST RATES			
London Bank Rate	11%	3-month	11.1%
3-month	11.1%	6-month	11.1%
6-month	11.1%	12-month	11.1%
12-month	11.1%	30-year	11.1%

CURRENCIES			
London	New York	1.5255	1.5255
Paris	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817
Frankfurt	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817
Zurich	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817
Switzerland	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817

NORTH SEA OIL			
London	New York	1.5255	1.5255
Paris	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817
Frankfurt	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817
Zurich	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817
Switzerland	2.7817	2.7817	2.7817

Argyll doubles market share in £681m deal

Gulliver buys Safeway

By Cliff Feltham

Mr James Gulliver's Argyll food group is paying £681 million for the chain of 132 Safeway supermarkets in the biggest deal in British food retailing. The takeover will double the size of Argyll, which runs the Presto food chain, creating a new group with sales of £2.2 billion and 9 per cent of the packaged grocery business.

Mr Gulliver, who lost to Guinness in the takeover battle for Distillers, has now bounced back to become the fourth largest grocer behind Sainsbury, Tesco and Dees.

But although the deal was warmly welcomed in the City, some analysts say that Mr Gulliver may have paid over the odds.

Andrieu said yesterday that Safeway is one of the best run supermarket groups and he will have to work very hard to squeeze more profits. Argyll has always been tipped as one of the front runners for Safeway ever since its American parent put the group up for auction to cut its own borrowings.

Safeway made pre-tax profits of £43.8 million in turnover of just over £1.0 billion last year, a 40 per cent improvement on the previous year. Another nine new stores are due to open this year.

Argyll, which reported profits of £64.6 million last year, operates 330 Presto stores of which 160 of the larger outlets

will be switched rapidly to start trading under the Safeway banner. This will create a powerful chain of 300 stores with a combined retail sales area of more than 5 million square feet and sales in excess of £2.0 billion.

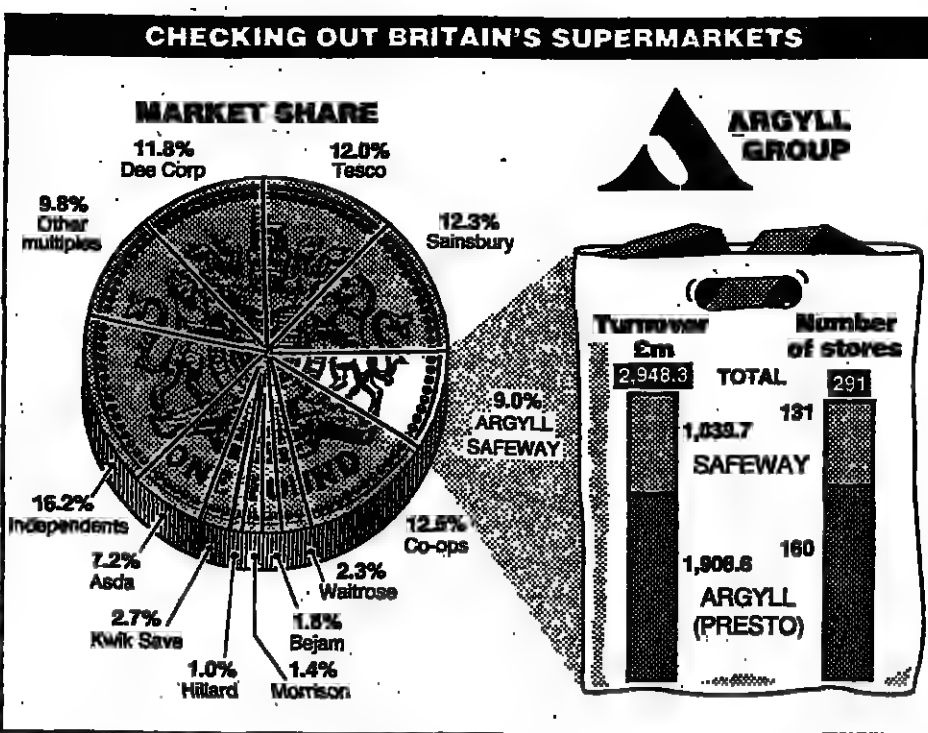
Some retailing analysts expressed doubts about the future role of the rump of the smaller stores in the group and how their pricing and product range could be accommodated within the framework of the new super group.

One immediate task for Mr Gulliver and his team will be to tackle gearing which, as a result of the acquisition, will shoot up to 98 per cent. One early remedy is likely to be the disposal of the company's drinks operation - Barton Brands and George Morton - which stand in the books at £86 million.

Mr Gulliver is paying for the Safeway acquisition through the issue of 194.1 million new shares in Argyll at 320p each which will be placed by Samuel Montagu, Credit Suisse First Boston and Charterhouse.

The remaining £60 million will be raised by an interest free, three-year loan note.

On the stock market Argyll shares jumped 25p to 366p. Mr Gulliver said last night that he believed Argyll had been able to pull off the deal because it had been prepared to close negotiations swiftly.



The Argyll-Safeway deal has been struck against the background of a fast-moving supermarkets industry with a rising number of outlets in the hands of the top half-dozen food retailers. Argyll, with its aggressive acquisitions policy, has been one of the prime movers in this development, together with Dees Corporation.

The majors in the industry have not been slow to recognize the economies of scale gained from being larger than the

competition both in terms of marketing and distribution and in the all-important buying function.

High levels of capital investment continue to be required - the majors are committing about £300 million a year - since well-located premises count for a lot. In addition to this, more sophisticated computer systems are being deployed which have obvious management advantages. A strong cash flow has, therefore, become a necessity.

Hint of a split on Argyll board

An evasive Mr James Gulliver appeared yesterday to have left the door ajar for a get-together with Guinness.

He said his Argyll group "has no intention whatsoever of bidding for Guinness or any part of Guinness."

This came after the overnight publication by Guinness of a letter from Mr Gulliver suggesting talks which might lead to a "friendly merger."

But Mr Gulliver would not quash speculation that an

agreed merger could still be on the cards. There was speculation also that there may be a rift in the Argyll boardroom.

Argyll said it "regrets that a personal letter, sent in good faith and couched in terms which were not meant to convey any intention by Argyll to make an offer for Guinness should have been

evidently misinterpreted and made public." It said it "has at no time contemplated making an offer for Guinness."

This appeared to contradict Mr Gulliver's own letter saying it was his board's "primary interest to effect a friendly merger."

However, stock market observers were rapidly discounting the prospects of an alliance.

"He is in the driving seat of the business which he knows best, supermarketing, and he would be well advised to leave Guinness alone," said an analyst.

Fairfax in
new media
bid move

Sydney (AP-Dow Jones) - The John Fairfax company took further legal action yesterday in an attempt to stop a takeover bid for the Herald & Weekly Times by Mr Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation.

Fairfax claimed in the Supreme Court of the State of Victoria that the takeover document fails to disclose that News Limited, the Australian company through which the bid is being made, is a foreign-controlled company that intends to acquire more than 15 per cent of Herald in contravention of Australia's Broadcasting Act.

Fairfax is seeking damages and a series of declarations, injunctions and orders blocking the news bid. It is also seeking to restrain the Herald directors from registering the transfer of shares to News.

The Fairfax offer is Aus\$16 a share and the News Corporation offer Aus\$15.

Fairfax, Australia's biggest media group, claims that the News Corporation unit company making the offer, News Ltd, is controlled by Mr Murdoch, a US citizen.

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal said late on Thursday that it would hold an inquiry next month into whether News Ltd is controlled by a foreigner.

Pound dips as poll
favours Labour

By Rodney Lord, Economics Editor

The pound was marked down in foreign exchange markets on news of a Gallup poll giving Labour a five-point lead over the Conservatives. But by the close it had recovered some of the lost ground as dealers re-assessed the significance of the poll.

Opening at 68.5 in terms of the trade-weighted index, sterling closed in London down 0.2 on the previous close at 68.9. The pound dipped 1/4 cent to \$1.5257 and 1/2 pence to DM2.7791.

Gilt mirrored the movement in the foreign exchange market, opening a point lower at the long end but recovering some ground through the day.

In the money markets three-month interbank money - regarded as the most reliable bellwether of interest rate

P&O may
sell stake
in Stockley

Speculation is growing that the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co, whose chairman is Sir Jeffrey Sterling, will sell its 29.9 per cent stake in Stockley, the fast-growing property company, to Stockley itself.

P&O acquired the Stockley stake with its £286.8 million agreed acquisition of European Ferries. P&O is prevented from selling the Stockley shares to anyone but Stockley until May, and then Stockley has first refusal for two years.

Mr Elliott Bernerd, a founder of Stockley, said that he would be interested in buying the stake "if the price is right."



Sir Jeffrey: could be planning deal

Paribas in demand

By Richard Thomson, Banking Correspondent

The foreign offering of shares in Compagnie Financiere de Paribas, the French bank, is already massively oversubscribed with a week to go before the offer period closes.

The bank said the 13.5 per cent of the issue being offered to overseas investors was six to 12 times oversubscribed.

NFC advises its shareholders

Don't vote for the float

By Teresa Poole, Business Correspondent

The board of National Freight Consortium will advise the group's 21,000 shareholders to vote against a stock market flotation in 1987 at next month's annual meeting.

When NFC was privatized in 1982 in an employee-led buyout, a commitment was given that, starting this year, shareholders would vote annually on the board's recommendation for or against flotation.

Since the buyout, shareholders in the distribution, travel and property company have seen the value of an original £1 investment increase to £35, capitalizing the company at £270 million.

Sir Peter Thompson, the chairman, said yesterday: "We see no pressure to go to the market. The imperatives are not there." The forthcoming election meant that it was probably not the right time

politically, the group had no need to raise capital and the internal market for the shares was working well, he added.

Research had shown that there were many employees with reservations and there was a "tremendous amount of educating to do" before going public. He said it was impossible to predict when the need would come for flotation.

He was speaking after the publication of the 1986 accounts which showed a 36 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £37 million on sales up 12 per cent at £748 million for the year to October 4.

About 70 per cent of NFC's 25,000 employees hold shares in the group. The company estimated that about 6,000 shareholders own at least 7,000 shares, valued at more than £12,000.

Employees are likely to support the board's decision on flotation.

Last year they voted for an extensive package of proposals designed to retain employee control while also widening the market for the shares.

This included the introduction of a profit-sharing scheme, for which £2.5 million of last year's profits was set aside, and allowed certain approved financial institutions to acquire shares in the company after employee demand has been satisfied on the four quarterly dealing days.

To date there have been no surplus shares but 15 new institutional shareholders took part in a placing of a limited number of shares sold by the original non-employee shareholders to widen the market.

The institutional stake remained at 17 per cent and is not expected to rise significantly this year.

Guinness fight
to unravel
Dewar's tangle

By Lawrence Lever

Guinness is fighting to untangle a legal nightmare over the distribution of its Dewar's Whisky brand by Schenley Industries in the US.

Documents in the board's possession indicate that the former Guinness board may have given Schenley the permanent right to distribute Dewar's in the US and effectively signed away the Dewar's brand name in that country.

Schenley bought over 17 million Guinness shares during the bid for Distillers thereby helping to support the Guinness share offer. It has recently secured the right to distribute Gordon's Gin for Guinness in the US.

The Schenley deal was arranged last year by Mr Thomas Ward, the American lawyer who has been asked to resign his Guinness directorship. The distribution agreement does not specify a date when the agreement should end and appears to have given Schenley the right to distribute Dewar's in perpetuity.

Apart from tying Guinness permanently to Schenley the agreement seems to have given Schenley the US rights to the Dewar's trademark since the trademark is specifically in with the agreement.

Schenley is regarded as a highly efficient distributor and used to distribute Dewar's for Distillers. However, the permanent link is highly unusual and Guinness which is not in official contact with Schenley is trying to find out why it has been created.

Meanwhile the search for the missing Guinness millions has revealed links between a mysterious £5 million payment and Sir Ralph Halpern's Burton Group.

Guinness have discovered a payment of £5.2 million to a Jersey based company called Marketing and Acquisitions Consultants.

This company has three shareholders, one of whom Michael James Darnley Dees, is a director of Debenhams, now owned by the Burton Group.

Mr Michael Wood, the Burton finance director said yesterday that "Burton Group has never had any interest in Marketing and Acquisitions Consultants Ltd and knows nothing of Mr Dees's involvement in it."

"No member of the Burton board has ever met him," he said.

Mr Wood explained that the two Debenhams subsidiaries of which Mr Dees is a director had been inherited by Burton and were no longer trading. "We will dissolve them in due course," he said.

It appears that Marketing and Acquisitions is merely a front company whose true owners are known to Mr Dees. A spokeswoman for Mr Dees said yesterday that he was abroad and that she had been instructed not to make any comment.

Mr Morgan Grenfell, the investment banking and securities group, announced yesterday that Sir Peter Carey Rawlinson as chairman of Morgan Grenfell & Co, the merchant banking arm.

Sir Peter, a director of the group, is heading the executive committee set up after the resignation of Mr Christopher Reeves, the group chief executive, earlier this week. Mr Rawlinson is retiring as chairman on medical advice.

Protect Distillers,
says Scots Tory

By Colin Narborough

Distillers, the Guinness subsidiary, should be "put in quarantine" until the legality of the brewing group's acquisition and possible compensation are established, according to Sir Alex Fletcher, Conservative MP for Edinburgh Central.

Sir Alex, former Minister for Corporate and Consumer Affairs, and an adviser to Argyll Group, which lost the battle for Distillers, was speaking after the latest revelations about Guinness's bid tactics.

He claimed: "There is a prima facie case that Guinness don't own Distillers at all."

Argyll is under pressure from some leading shareholders

to begin legal proceedings against Guinness. Apart from the £55 million bid costs, it is considering claims for more substantial loss of profits.

Sir Alex was not clear what legal procedures would be required to "quarantine" Distillers from the rest of Guinness. "My concern is the legality of Guinness's acquisition and Guinness's right to make decisions about the future of Distillers."

He added that, if Argyll was illegally robbed of a chance of acquiring Distillers, it should be able to retain the options of acquiring the company or financial compensation, or both.

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"The Investment Opportunity for 1985"	32.0	28%
OCTOBER		
"No. 1 in Europe over 1 year"	40.1	60%
NOVEMBER		
"No. 1 in Europe yet again"	44.0	76%
DECEMBER		
"Europe 86, from strength to strength"	47.1	88%
JANUARY 1986		
"The No. 1 Unit Trust"	52.7	111%
JULY		
"Europe, Go for the Encore"	62.8	151%
JANUARY 1987		
The No. 1 European Unit Trust over 2 years	79.5	218%

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1. *Chlorophyll a* (Chl *a*)

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The adjacent dining room was undamaged, but it was separated from the lounge only by sliding doors, and it

... ..

patching up the damaged part of a three-piece suite, when the repair shows, or with an odd item of furniture for an original matching set.

Not the easiest people to find

**Institute of Public Loss Assessors, 14 Red Lion Street, Chesham, Buckinghamshire (0494 782342)*

	Bid	Offer	Change	Volume
Equity Account	296.0		+18.8	
Mingo Fund Account	236.1	217.0	+2.7	
Energy Fund Account	299.9	294.1	+2.9	
Prop Fund Account	199.7	199.7	+0.1	
Fixed Int Fd Acc	181.9	179.4	-0.5	
Intl Fund Account	294.5	310.1	+5.6	
Mutual Fund Account	131.9	126.9	+0.2	

WATER S&S ACCT	118.9	121.0	+0.7	..
PUMP S&S ACCT	548.7	548.7	0.0	..
WATER METER ACCT	158.5	158.4	-0.6	..
SEWER DISCHARGE	114.4	120.4	+6.0	..
SEWER SOUTY	157.1	159.1	+1.9	..
SEWER PROPERTY	112.7	118.7	+6.0	..
SEWER FOSTED IN	124.6	131.2	+7.6	..
SEWER INF	126.6	143.8	+17.2	..
SEWER MONEY	118.1	122.2	+4.1	..
SEWER INDEBTS	100.6	105.9	+5.3	..
SUN LIFE LIMIT				
31 James Barton, Bristol 0880 786,				
5072 42911				
Managed Assets	451.3	475.1	+3.0	..
Property Account	216.9	228.4	+1.5	..

Friedl Int Account	205.6	216.5	+1.3
Indus-United Account	113.4	119.4	+4.9
Cash Account	184.3	194.1	+9.1
Genl Equity Account	198.7	210.3	+11.6
Genl Acct	139.4	138.6	-1.8
USGen Account	233.5	245.5	+12.0
Pacific Account	150.6	158.6	+8.0
Fin Genl Acct	433.0	455.6	+22.6
Investment Account	281.8	288.9	+7.1
US Dollar Account	94.3	95.3	+1.0
Yen Account	137.7	134.5	-3.2
Euro Cur Account	140.5	145.5	+5.0
Distribution Fund	140.5	149.0	+8.5
European	111.1	117.0	+5.9
THE LIFE LTD			

Managed Fund	1981.3	1984.4	+3.9	..
Property Fund	117.8	124.1	-0.1	..
Fixed Interest Fund	129.5	136.4	-8.0	..
Money Fund	119.2	125.6	+0.7	..
Balanced Fund	168.3	208.8	+1.4	..
TARGET LIFE				
Target: Housing, Catechism, Flood, Agriculture, Banks				
Actual: 1984	154.6	126.7	-3.5	..
American Eagle	114.6	126.7	-0.5	..
Commodity	106.5	112.2	-1.0	..
Deposit	157.8	168.3	+0.9	..
Insurance	52.3	55.1	..	..
Financial	203.2	213.9	-2.1	..

Gold	123.7	142.9	-1.8	..
Income	251.5	243.6	..	..
International Equity	330.0	305.7	..	..
Japan	253.2	320.8	..	..
Malaysia & Singapore	412.7	434.5	-0.7	..
Managed	95.8	101.9	..	..
Managed Currency	142.0	149.5	..	..
Managed Prop	179.0	188.5	-0.6	..
Pacific	137.1	146.4	..	..
Preference	213.9	225.1	-1.1	..
Property	26.8	27.7	..	..
Special Situations	10.3	..	..	..
Technology	101.1	106.5	+2.3	..
UK Equity	479.5	504.8	-7.3	..
US Seasonal Bond	176.7	198.1	-7.1	..
EUR Seasonal	..	..	..	..

TRANSNATIONAL			
Trans Bldgs. London EC4A 1YU			
01-831 7481			
Series 2 Man Fund	280.7	256.4	
Series 2 Equity Fund	319.4	357.2	+4.1
Series 2 Prol Fund	319.4	327.3	+2.0
Series 2 Int'l Inv Fund	322.2	327.3	+1.3
Series 2 Money Fd	186.9	184.1	+0.2
Series 2 Overseas Fd	286.1	287.9	+1.8
Totals Invest Fund	224.6	231.7	+0.5
Totals Merged Fund	380.3	402.1	+3.6
Mixed Inv Fd Int	250.7	274.4	+2.3
Acc Accum	316.2	332.8	+2.9

London Road, Gloucester	Score	Class	Score
Managed Fund	315.6	336.4	+0.1
Gift Managed	297.3	306.8	+4.5
Property Fund	325.9	343.1	+1.4
Merchandise	262.6	275.5	+6.2
Unit Linked	345.3	363.0	+1.6
High Yield Fund	251.9	433.3	-3.1
Balanced Fund	261.8	384.3	+3.6
Mutual Fund	340.8	233.4	-1.8
International	262.2	276.1	-3.7
Growth Cap	288.8	305.2	-1.1
Debt Account	370.0	388.5	-1.4
Perpetual Act	328.9	168.5	-1.1
Henderson Act	147.4	198.3	+6.1

3-Way Fund	329.0	+3.3	..
Equity	555.0	+4.2	..
Bond	367.8	+6.4	..
Property Fund	188.4	..	..
0 Asset Inv Fund	555.0	+4.2	..
UK Investment	505.8	+3.4	..
Reserve Fund	233.1	+0.3	..
UK Equity	226.6	+0.8	..
N American Equity	188.4	+2.3	..
For East Equity	284.0	+2.5	..
Fixed	169.2	+0.4	..
Cash Deposit	127.2	+1.0	..
Property	107.7	..	..

Managed	277.9	268.0	+6.8	..
Index-Linked Fd	207.8	216.5	+8.2	..
Star Mngd 2	113.5	119.8	+5.5	..
Star Mngd 2	215.7	227.1	+11.2	..
Star Mngd 3	226.1	236.0	+9.9	..
Star Mngd 4	177.2	185.6	+8.4	..
Star Mngd 5	200.3	219.3	+19.0	..

VANDERBILT LIFE ASS		Place		Visitors	\$W1	SBA
Portland House, Sog	01-822 8293					
Managed Fund	448.2	489.7	-1.5	..		
Equity Fund	870.2	916.0	-7.5	..		
Intl Fund	325.8	365.4	-6.8	..		
Fixed Interest Fund	333.4	361.0	-9.8	..		
Property Fund	272.6	286.9	+9.4	..		

Pacific Basin Fd	185.5	226.8	-0.5
N American Fd	144.0	151.8	-0.5
Euro Fund	214.9	226.2	-7.3

These figures refer to Thursday's trading

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UNIT LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

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FAMILY MONEY/2

Community of prices

House prices in Europe are broadly in line with those of the UK, says the Nationwide Building Society, in a new report published this week. The major exception is West Germany where owner-occupation is so expensive that rented accommodation accounts for more than 60 per cent of the market. The comparable figure in Britain is only 38 per cent, says the Nationwide.

The report also shows that the UK stands midway up the table when it comes to the amount needed to buy a home. The average married worker in the UK would have needed to work 165 hours in 1984 to buy an average house. This compares with a low of 6,469 hours in Denmark and a high of 20,458 hours in West Germany.

In the UK, says the Nationwide, the present housing and taxation systems are so favourable to owner-occupation that a general collapse in prices is most unlikely.

Christmas movers

Home-buyers used the Christmas period to house-hunt in an effort to take advantage of lower prices before the expected spring boom. So says the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, which reports sales made right up to Christmas Eve and between Christmas and the New Year.

Peter Miller, of the RICS, says the possibility of a 1987 general election may cause uncertainty in the housing market and that while house price increases are likely to move upwards again in the spring, they are unlikely to be as volatile as in 1986.



"I think we're the perfect couple - I'm lonely, you're rich; I'm bored, you're rich; I'm broke, you're rich; I'm desperate, you're rich..."

"Instead, we anticipate an active but more rational market," says Mr Miller.

Looking East

A new unit trust specializing in the potentially high-growth economies of the Far East has been launched by John Goveitt Unit Management Ltd. Goveitt's Pacific Strategy Fund will aim for capital growth from attractive-looking companies in countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Taiwan, Thailand, South Korea and the Philippines. It could be exciting but it is not one for widows and orphans. Minimum lump sum investment is £500 and there is a savings scheme which starts at £25 a month.

Details: John Goveitt Unit Management Ltd, Winchester House, 77 London Wall, London EC2N 1DH (01-588 5620).

Double Top snag

The Leamington Spa Building Society has teamed up with Commercial Union Assurance to offer what sounds like an enticing package, until you read the small print. The Double Top Account offers savers with at least £10,000 to spare an equal split between a building society account and an insurance bond. The building society account offers a highly competitive rate of interest of 12 per cent a year net of basic rate tax but - and here's the snag - it is guaranteed for only six months. After that, the interest rate will drop, probably by around 3 per cent.

What is more, although the CU insurance bond has performed well enough since it started in 1983, it suffers the disadvantage of all such products - that the insurance company has to make an allowance for capital gains tax liability, which depresses the performance of the bond in comparison with similar unit trust products which do not pay CGT.

Lessons in finance

A new financial services company, Fraser Marr Ltd, has been set up by former executives of school fees specialists C. Howard & Partners. The new company is a subsidiary of Owners Abroad plc, the tour operator and airline group. School fees advice is certain to be high on the list of services offered by Fraser Marr but the company plans also to cover areas such as tax and pension planning as well as mortgages.

Fraser Marr has its head office at 229-231 High Holborn, London WC1. There are offices in Bath and Manchester as well.

Guernsey offer

Monday is the opening date for a new Guernsey-based residential property fund from N.M. Schroder Financial Management. Initial offer price is £1 per 1p participating share. This comprises the nominal value of 1p, a premium of 89p and an initial charge of 6p. Minimum initial investment is £1,000. Schroder's Malcolm Taylor explains that the fund's main objective is to invest in prime residential properties, which will be let to corporate tenants for use



Malcolm Taylor: investing in prime residential properties

by their senior executives. Initially the fund will confine its investments to central London and parts of Surrey but may look further afield in due course.

Details: N.M. Schroder Financial Management International Limited, PO Box 273, Schroder House, The Grange, St Peter Port, Guernsey, G1 (0481 26750).

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Address

Financial Adviser (if any)

Now for Switzerland

EBC Amro, which already markets unit trusts concentrating on France and The Netherlands, launches a Swiss Growth Trust today.

Most of the Swiss securities business is centred on Zurich, and the Swiss equity market is the fifth largest in Europe with a total capitalization about one-third that of the UK. The EBC Amro fund will be managed in London with investment advice from three Swiss banks - Oppenheimer Pison and Vontobel of Zurich and Heisch of Geneva.

The managers forecast an internationalization of the Swiss capital market so that Zurich can compete more effectively with London and New York. This is a long-term trend but EBC Amro's Jane Swinglehurst points to two factors which she says will boost performance this year.

First, Swiss pension funds have recently been allowed to increase their investment in Swiss equities and this will release institutional liquidity into the market. Secondly,



Jane Swinglehurst: two factors many Swiss registered shares, previously available only to Swiss nationals, are now available to non-Swiss investors, via warrants.

Minimum investment in the fund is £500. The aim is capital growth from a portfolio comprising financials, chemicals, retail services, food and drink and industrials. Probably good as a long-term bet, but don't look for short-term fireworks.

Details: EBC Amro, 6 Devereux Square, London EC2M 4YE (01-621 0101).

HIGHER INTEREST RATES

30 DAY SHARE: 9.10% - 9.31% - 13.11%
Per Annum

90 DAY SHARE: 9.38% - 9.52% - 13.41%
Per Annum

3 YEAR SHARE: 9.58% - 9.73% - 13.70%
Per Annum

For full details of the EBC Amro Trusts, please contact the nearest branch office or write to the EBC Amro Trusts, 6 Devereux Square, London EC2M 4YE. Telephone: (01-621) 0101.

Portsmouth Building Society
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*Source: Plannet Savings, after prices had been adjusted for inflation.

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Please invest £ in Mercury Recovery Fund (minimum initial investment £1,000) in ACCUMULATION/DISTRIBUTION* units at the price ruling on receipt of this application.
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Address _____
Post Code _____
I am/we are over 18 years of age.
Signature _____ Date _____
Particulars and statement of assets and liabilities should be attached. Please delete, as appropriate, whichever of the following statements will be completed. Payment and correspondence will be sent to the address unless you specify otherwise.
(Tick one - not both) residents of the Republic of Ireland.

The price of units, and the income from them, can go down as well as up.
Past performance, it should be remembered, is not necessarily a guide to future growth or rates of return.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The aim of Mercury Recovery Fund is to invest capital in the UK and overseas in companies whose shares are expected to rise in value over a period of five years. The fund is not a speculative investment and does not seek to replicate the performance of any particular stock market index. The Manager may also invest in other securities and may use derivatives to manage the fund's exposure to the UK and overseas markets. The minimum investment is £1,000. Subsequent investments may be made at any time. Units may be purchased or sold at any time and the price of units will be published daily in the Financial Times and Press in the Daily Telegraph. The Manager will be responsible for any loss or gain on the investment.

Mercury Recovery Fund is a unit trust which is authorised by the Financial Services Commission. The fund is managed by Mercury Fund Managers Ltd. The Manager is responsible for the investment of the fund's assets. The fund's assets are invested in the UK and overseas in companies whose shares are expected to rise in value over a period of five years. The fund is not a speculative investment and does not seek to replicate the performance of any particular stock market index. The Manager may also invest in other securities and may use derivatives to manage the fund's exposure to the UK and overseas markets. The minimum investment is £1,000. Subsequent investments may be made at any time. Units may be purchased or sold at any time and the price of units will be published daily in the Financial Times and Press in the Daily Telegraph. The Manager will be responsible for any loss or gain on the investment.

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The trio who topped the panel of experts

Readers will draw their own conclusions from the fact that all three winners in our general category, and perhaps even more startlingly the three winners in our under-18 category beat our panel of unit trust advisers in *The Times* 1986 Unit Trusts Competition.

On the basis used for the competition — selecting the unit trust which entrants believed would outperform all others in the period February to December 1986 inclusive — our panel of experts was also beaten by the winners in our professional advisers category, who entered independently.

The overall winner in the general category is a 26-year-old chartered accountant Paul McNece, Mr McNece, a Bradford University mathematics graduate who works with the accountancy firm of Deloitte in Leeds, came top out of a total of 2,300 entrants.

His first choice was the star-performing Legal & General Far Eastern fund, selected as first-choice fund by only one other entrant — Dorothy Kelly — who came second in this category.

Mr McNece's second and third choices, Target Pacific Income and Baltic Japan & General, also served him well

with the result that on a notional initial investment of £300 split equally among his three choices, he ended 1986 with a total return of £538.90 on an offer-to-offer basis, with net income reinvested.

But how does Mr McNece account for his success, particularly given his own admission that he knows little about unit trusts? He simply studied the performance ta-

Honeymoon in the Caribbean

bles and decided that the Far East looked a good bet. As for 1987, Mr McNece is undecided as between the United States and Continental Europe, but thinks the UK market could suffer from a combination of City scandals and pre-election jitters.

And most important of all, how is Mr McNece going to spend his £500? The chances are that it will go towards his honeymoon in July which, thanks to his windfall, may now be spent in the Caribbean.

Among the under-18s, the first prize of £500 goes to Mark Herrmann, a first-year undergraduate studying politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford University. Mr Herrmann, whose home is in

Leicestershire, was one month short of his 18th birthday when he entered the competition.

How does he account for his success? "At the time," he says, "I had a vague idea that Japan was the place to be." From there on in, he recalls, it was a question of studying the performance tables in the magazine *Money Management*.

What Mr Herrmann came up with as a first choice was Sun Life Japan Growth. On an offer-to-offer basis the value of this fund went up by 84.3 per cent in the 11 months of our competition from the start of February to the end of December.

Mr Herrmann also did well with his second and third choices. These funds — Oppenheimer International Growth and Baring Japan Sunrise — increased in value by 26.4 per cent and 29.7 per cent respectively on an offer-to-offer basis. This set of results meant that a notional investment of £300 split equally by Mr Herrmann among the three funds would have resulted in a total return of £440.40.

When we telephoned Mr Herrmann earlier this week to congratulate him on his win, he seemed none too sure about how he would use the

money. But, given his immediate reaction — "My God, that's quite a sizeable addition to a student's funds" — it is clearly not going to go to waste.

In the category of professional advisers, heartiest congratulations go to Paul Archer, who works as an adviser on Japanese investment in the London office of the Japanese securities house, Yamaichi. Mr Archer says this was the first time he had entered any competition.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Mr Archer's first choice was a Japanese-investing fund, MIM Japan Performance, now MIM Britannia Japan Performance. Mr Archer



Winners' gallery: from left, Mark Herrmann, Paul McNece, Paul Archer

joined Mark Herrmann in following up with Oppenheimer International Growth. But his third choice, Framlington American & General, did miserably.

Overall, on an offer to offer basis, Mr Archer would have turned a notional £300 equal-split investment into £400.80.

Looking back, Mr Archer recalls that his first choice of MIM Japan was a case of following a respected fund manager, Stephen Barber, who recognized that the domestic sector of the Japanese economy was the place to be in 1986. Mr Archer's choice of Oppenheimer International Growth was determined by its good track record as mon-

itored by *Planned Savings*, and his faith in the continuing ability of the fund manager.

Mr Archer remains bullish on world equity markets for 1987 and says the first month of this year indicates that the United States will be the powerhouse market. But unlike many other investment specialists, he is not writing Japan off.

"You mustn't underestimate the ability of the Japanese market to sustain itself," says Mr Archer, who cites the forthcoming privatization of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, which will be the world's largest corporation. "It's a flagship issue, and the Japanese government can't

afford a flop."

Among our panel of experts, first place on the basis of the 1986 rules goes to Jamie Berry, of Berry Asset Management, whose first choice, Oppenheimer Special Situations, now Oppenheimer Worldwide Recovery, showed the highest ranking of the first choices among our four experts.

Looking back, Mr Berry says that at the start of 1986 it was difficult to make a nap selection that would hold good for the entire year. In retrospect, he is pleased with the Oppenheimer fund, which he describes as small and aggressively managed.

As for his second choice, GT Germany, Mr Berry says that although the Deutschmark strengthened during 1986, the market itself did nothing from the second quarter onwards. He concedes now that he would have done better in a more broadly based European fund which had greater exposure to the economies of France, Italy and Spain. As for his third choice, Perpetual International Growth, "it's lost its way in the recent past," he says.

Second place for 1986 among our panel of experts is claimed by Mark Searle, of Richards Longstaff. But despite concentrating on the right market — Japan — Mr Searle describes his choice of funds within that market as "less than overwhelming".

Like Mr Berry, Mr Searle is disappointed with the performance of his Perpetual fund in 1986. He says Perpetual has not got its geographical balance right at the present time and that the group as a whole is experiencing growing pains.

For the future, Mr Searle sees great potential in the smaller Pacific Basin economies. In order of preference he goes for Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Thailand. The export prospects of these economies, he believes, will benefit from the strengthened yen.

Peter Hargreaves, of Bristol-based unit trust advisers Hargreaves Lansdown, chose the Prudential's Holborn Communications fund as his first choice, Abbey American Growth was his second choice and Target European Special Situations his third.

Looking back, Mr Hargreaves says that at this time last year the United States looked excellent value and that as it was likely to

account for 50 per cent of the Holborn fund, the prospects were good. As it turned out, technology had a bad year, even low-tech, and Mr Hargreaves now says he is disappointed with what happened in 1986, even though the fund is now starting to turn for the better.

As for Abbey American, Mr Hargreaves says clients who have been in this fund for two

or three years have done well but that it is little consolation for 1986 investors.

The fund that rescued Mr Hargreaves' portfolio from the depths of obscurity was his third choice, Target European Special Situations. This fund turned in a creditable performance, rising 53.5 per cent on an offer-to-offer basis, placing the fund 85th overall in the 1986 rankings.

Peter Edwards of Premier Unit Trust Brokers, also of Bristol, fared poorly in his first choice fund, Target American Eagle. A £100 investment in this fund on February 1 grew to only £102.1 by December 31, even on an offer-to-offer basis. Mr Edwards regards it as disappointing that he could not have chosen a better fund in a sector where there were some winners despite a neutral currency effect.

Despite finishing fourth out of a field of four professional advisers on the basis of the 1986 rules, Mr Edwards finished top of the quartet on the basis of total return from his three selections combined. His overall performance was rescued by his second and third choices — Touche Renneaux Smaller Companies and MIM Japan.

Notwithstanding the less than spectacular success of our unit trust experts in 1986, we have decided to give them all another chance this year. We have changed the rules slightly for them and for our readers and the entry form is on this page.

The entry form shows you what to do to get yourself in the running for a slice of the £2,700 total prize money. The entry form will appear again in next Saturday's *Family Money* along with our experts' tips for you to consider. Just keep them even more on their toes this year we shall be lining up alongside them with *The Times* unit trust tips for 1987.

Peter Garthland

HOW TO ENTER THE TIMES UNIT TRUSTS COMPETITION 1987

HOW TO ENTER THE TIMES UNIT TRUSTS COMPETITION 1987

Enter *The Times* Unit Trusts Competition 1987 and you could win £500, £250 or £150. There are three categories — General, Professional Adviser and Under-18s — and there will be three prizes in each. Just pick the three unit trusts you believe will provide the best return during the coming months. To help you to make your choice we are including this week, and next, the performance figures showing how unit trusts fared over the period of our competition last year (see facing page).

To help you further, we also show a list of those unit trusts launched during 1986.

Your choice of unit trusts might even include ones that have been launched in the early part of 1987. This is acceptable.

Next week there will be another entry form and we shall also be revealing what our panel of experts are tipping for the coming year. *The Times* will also be offering unit trust tips for 1987. Just fill in the entry form below.

You are allowed three choices and they will all be taken into account. The winner in each category will be the entrant whose total return is the greatest on the assumption of a notional £100 invested in each of the three choices. Switching is not allowed during the year.

Only entries on official entry forms will be accepted and they must arrive at *The Times* not later than Thursday, February 5.

1987 Competition Rules

1. Competitors are invited to use their skill and judgment to select three UK authorized unit trusts (not offshore funds) which they believe will outperform all others during 1987.
2. The winner will be the competitor whose three choices, taken together, show the best performance in the period February 1 to December 31, 1987, on the basis of a notional £100 investment in each of the three choices.
3. Entries will be limited to one per person and must be made on official entry forms printed in *The Times*. Prototypes are not acceptable.
4. Opening prices will be those published on Saturday, January 31. Closing prices will be those of Thursday, December 31.
5. In the event of unit trusts merging, final performance will be calculated as if the unit trusts had merged at the end of the competition period.
6. Performance will be monitored by *Planned Savings* magazine and is on an offer-to-offer basis, with net income reinvested.
7. Entries must be received by Thursday, February 5, at the offices of *The Times*.
8. Proof of posting will not be accepted as evidence of receipt.
9. Employees of *The Times*, *The Sunday Times* and their families are not eligible to enter.
10. The editors' decision in all matters is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

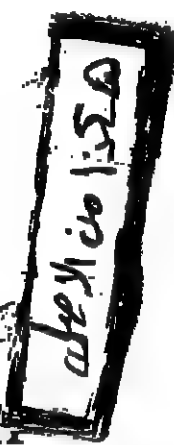
ENTRY FORM

Name.....
Address.....
Telephone number.....
My three unit trust choices for 1987 are:
1.....
2.....
3.....
Category (Please tick appropriate box)
General ☐ Professional Adviser ☐ Under 18 years ☐
Send your completed entry form to The Editor, Family Money, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E9 6JN. Completed entry forms to arrive not later than February 5, 1987.
PLEASE MARK YOUR ENVELOPE — UNIT TRUSTS COMPETITION

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Your subscription to the PEP 87 plan is a fixed sum of £420, which will be invested in Framlington PEP 87 Trust. During the initial launch period until 13th February units in the trust are offered at the fixed price of 50p each. After then the fund will be valued every day and the plan manager will buy units for members at the ruling offer price.

Subscription to the PEP 87 plan can be made up to and including 31st December 1987 only. You may terminate your plan at any time; but if you do so before 1st January 1989 you will lose the PEP tax advantages. On termination you will receive the full bid value of the units at that time.

TAX-FREE

After 31st December 1988 any proceeds from your plan will be completely free from capital gains tax, no matter how great your profit. The income tax paid will be refunded by the Inland Revenue and reinvested on your behalf.

A UNIT TRUST

The PEP 87 unit trust is authorised by the Department of Trade and Industry. The underlying securities will be held in trust by the Trustee, Lloyds Bank. Apart from the special features built in to give you the benefits of a Personal Equity Plan, it will be run in other ways as an ordinary unit trust.

BRITISH INVESTMENT

The unit trust will invest for maximum growth in British companies. It will aim for a concentrated portfolio of shares with good growth potential. Unlike PEPs investing in shares, which can invest only in those companies which have agreed to send out annual reports, PEP 87 can invest in any British share traded on the London Stock Exchange. This should give it a substantial investment advantage. At the same time its wider spread of investment will allow it to place emphasis on smaller, progressive companies with good growth potential. Up to 25 per cent of the fund may be held in USM shares, particularly those with prospects of transferring to a full listing.

ANNUAL REPORT

Members will receive a detailed annual report on the fund as at 31st December each year. It will give a short report on each company in which the unit trust invests, setting out its progress, its promise and its problems.

These reports will be clearly written and, if necessary, hard hitting.

ANNUAL MEETING

All members will be invited to attend unitholders meetings and an annual meeting in London on the first Tuesday in March each year. The first meeting will be on March 1st 1988.

VOTING RIGHTS

Votes at unitholders meetings or on issues affecting an underlying company (for example, in a take-over) will be decided by a referendum of all the members, in the latter case if requested by a company involved (in which case the costs would be borne by the company) or by at least 1% of the members.

HOW TO INVEST

There is a fixed subscription of £420. This will be invested for you in the relevant number of units, rounded up to the nearest whole unit. Until 13th February 1987 units are at the fixed price of 50p.

You subscribe to the plan by completing the application form below and sending it to us with your cheque. You may not invest if you have already subscribed to another PEP in 1987. If you do invest you may not subscribe to any other PEP until 1988.

In order to make the most of both the growth in the underlying investments and of the tax privileges associated with a PEP, investors should regard this as a long term investment. They are reminded that in-

vestment in the plan carries risks as well as the chance of reward and that the price of units and the income reinvested on your behalf can go down as well as up. If you are in any doubt about this offer you should consult your professional adviser.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Your plan may be terminated at any time. You will receive the cash value of units at the ruling bid price. If your plan is terminated before 1st January 1989 it may give rise to a capital gains tax liability and you will not receive the income tax advantage associated with a PEP. Your plan may be transferred to another plan manager on request. Title to your units is vested in the plan manager or its nominee on your behalf.

The unit trust fund will be valued every day and the price of units published in leading newspapers.

The annual charge is 1 per cent (+VAT). The initial charge included in the offer price of units is 5 per cent. These charges are payable to the managers of the unit trust; there are no charges in respect of the PEP.

All units are accumulation units in which net income is reinvested. Tax is reclaimed from the Inland Revenue annually following the accounting date on 31st December and reinvested when it is received. The first accounting date will be 31st December 1988. We plan to launch another PEP unit trust in 1988. PEP 88, all investors in PEP 87 will be sent details. After January 1990 PEP 87 and PEP 88 may be merged together and may be joined by other PEPs launched in subsequent years. Mergers will not require a referendum or meeting of the members.

Commission of 3 per cent (+VAT) is payable to recognised intermediaries.

PEP 87 plan is managed by Framlington Investment Management Limited, a licensed dealer in securities which has been approved as a plan manager under the PEP regulations. The PEP 87 unit trust is authorised by the Department of Trade and Industry and managed by Framlington Unit Management Limited. The Trustee is Lloyds Bank Plc. Bank Framlington Investment Management Limited and Framlington Unit Management Limited are subsidiaries of Framlington Group plc and are at 3 London Wall Buildings, London EC2M 5NQ. Telephone: 01-625 5181.

INITIAL OFFER

UNTIL 13TH FEBRUARY 1987.

TO: FRAMLINGTON INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT LIMITED, 3 LONDON WALL BUILDINGS, LONDON EC2M 5NQ

I WISH TO SUBSCRIBE £420 TO FRAMLINGTON PEP 87 PLAN UPON THE TERMS SET OUT ABOVE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WILL BE INVESTED IN UNITS OF PEP 87 TRUST AT THE INITIAL OFFER PRICE OF 50p PER UNIT. I ENCLOSE A CHEQUE FOR £420 PAYABLE TO FRAMLINGTON INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT LIMITED.

I CONFIRM THAT I AM AGED 18 OR OVER, THAT I HAVE NOT MADE AN APPLICATION FOR ANY OTHER PEP IN THE CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR AND THAT I AM RESIDENT AND ORDINARILY RESIDENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. I AUTHORISE YOU TO HOLD MY CASH SUBSCRIPTION AND UNITS IN THE UNIT TRUST AND TO RECLAIM THE TAX RELIEF ON MY BEHALF. I UNDERSTAND THAT WHEN I TAKE MY PROCEEDS MY PLAN WILL BE CANCELLED.

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FULL FIRST NAMES.....

ADDRESS.....

NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER.....

TAX DISTRICT AND REFERENCE (IF KNOWN).....

I DECLARE THAT THE INFORMATION ABOVE IS TRUE AND CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF. I AGREE TO INFORM YOU WITHOUT DELAY OF ANY CHANGE IN MY CIRCUMSTANCES AS SET OUT IN THIS FORM.

SIGNATURE.....

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الشيخ ١٥٥٥

Access. Databank is a mini-filing system with 10 key sections to hold all the information relating to your key job objectives. You simply determine the areas that are important to you then insert the relevant forms and information to create an invaluable reference file. Databank also features an 'Ideas Bank' to record off-the-cuff inspiration.

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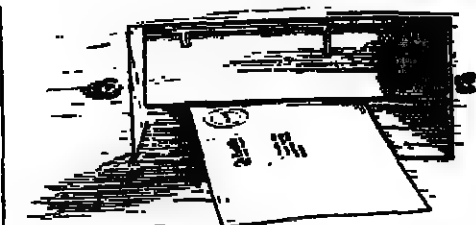
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Good terms for short term

LIFE POLICIES

Your money or your life! That standard cry of the 18th-century highwayman provides the basis for a new policy launched by Allied Dunbar this week. The group is moving strongly into term insurance, which provides maximum protection for your family at very little cost.

The contract lasts for a fixed period of perhaps 10 or 15 years, and if you die within that time, there will be a considerable payout for your family - because the odds are strongly on your survival. But if you outlive the contract, you have to start again.

Term insurance makes sense for people who want to be sure that if anything happens to them, their partners will have enough to bring up the family. Businesses that want to protect themselves against the impact of losing some key executive are another obvious market.

Ten years ago, few insurers were really interested in selling term insurance, though it was always available. Allied Dunbar's launch shows how much times are changing.

The new scheme has many an actuarial twiddle, as you would expect from the company, though, to be fair, many

of them make a lot of sense.

For a start, all the policies are "convertible". If you take out a policy but want to switch into an Allied savings plan or a whole-of-life policy when it ends, you can do so on the standard terms - even if you are at death's door. You can go on with this conversion process, as every policy ends, until you are 65.

Allied Dunbar's rates are certainly lower than those most insurers provide, at the outset. A man of 30 who does not smoke and wants £150,000 cover for 10 years has to pay only £11 month. The rate for women is £10.85.

But charges rise dramatically the older you are - and the gap between what men and women pay starts to widen. For instance, men of 40 wanting the same potential £150,000 benefit over 10 years have to pay £27.05, whereas

Company has its own question on Aids

the rate for women is only £18.80.

The contracts are unit-linked, and the starting figures assume that the group will get a return of 8.25 per cent, after allowing for all its expenses, including deaths, commission and start-up charges. Allied Dunbar will look at how things are going, first after five years, and then year by year in the last five years of the contract.

If the returns are higher than expected, the policy's potential value will go up. But if an Aids epidemic or a stock market collapse ensures that today's assumptions are too optimistic, your monthly premiums will rise to allow for it.

Like most other insurers, Allied Dunbar has its own question on Aids in the proposal form - though it asks only whether you have had a blood test, and if so what the results were. The company may insist on a medical anyway. But unlike most other insurers, it will allow you to have it done by your own doctor, and not by an outsider.

Once you are accepted, there are endless opportunities to raise the insurance levels. For a start, Allied Dunbar will assume that you want your premiums, and the potential payout, to rise in line with earnings year by year - unless you opt out.

That may be useful, though cynics may reflect that it is one way to keep the early premiums down. That is only the first chance to boost the premiums and a potential payout. The company has established a series of "trigger" events to help you to do so. If you marry, have or adopt a child, or increase your mortgage, you can double the value of your policy automatically - though there is a ceiling of £100,000 a time. At the more affluent end of the market, you can make the same move, if you find some inheritance pushes up the potential tax bill on your own estate.

If your family or financial circumstances are unchanged



but you want to raise your insurance levels, you can generally do so, but this time the company can insist on a medical.

Like almost every other company, Allied Dunbar has special rates for non-smokers - up to 35 per cent lower. But the definition is relatively generous. If you have given up for a year, you count as a non-smoker - and the same goes for people who keep strictly to pipes and cigars.

The group will concentrate on four main markets. Salesmen may start with small businesses, where two or three people at the top provide most of the driving force. If one of them is killed by a coronary or a car crash, in the next five or 10 years a keyman policy (merely term insurance with a corporate benefit) will at least provide a breathing space.

The policies can be very useful too, when directors of a small firm have an agreement to buy the shares that any one of them leaves behind in the event of early death.

There is an equally strong market with inheritance tax. Many people in their forties with their own homes suddenly find themselves inheriting

ing their parents' houses worth possibly £60,000 or more. If you add that alone to what they may have already, they will find themselves or rather their heirs in the inheritance tax-paying classes.

A term policy on their own lives can provide some of the funds to meet it.

Allied is also going to sell the policies to people with repayment mortgages unless they already have term insurance.

But term policies make most sense of all for parents with relatively young children. Everyone thinks of the young widow with little income raising children on her own. But working widows could find it just as difficult to look after the children and make ends meet.

Insurers always used to claim that selling really basic insurance of this kind was

Sales bring in so little commission

difficult, because there is nothing for a survivor. But term insurance sells excellently in America.

The real problem may be the commission rates for those who sell them. On paper they look excellent, for they provide up to 90 per cent of the first year's premium. But the premiums themselves are so low that they bring in sellers little cash.

All the same, Allied Dunbar's entry shows that term policies will not be the Cinderella they once were.

Tom Tickell

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Probably there is one investment philosophy that is more successful than any other.

Look for a "winner." Look for a company with people at the centre who can manage and motivate - and innovate. And keep a company successful.

Look at the most dynamic companies in Britain and you will find they are nearly all driven by winners. A Hanson Trust will be powered by a Lord Hanson, a Burton Group by a Ralph Halpern, a Marks & Spencer by a Lord Rayner.

Back such companies and the gains can be good. Because winners tend to produce the best results.

An investment in a company like Stanley Kalms' Dixons Group can easily multiply several fold in a few years. For example, £1,000 invested in Dixons back in 1980 would now be worth over £15,000 - 15 times as much.*

Regency's new Elite Fund is singlemindedly devoted to the philosophy of finding and backing such winners.

It is itself managed by a winner - Kleinwort Greaveson Investment Management, one of the UK's largest and most successful investment managers. They have just the expertise to select those dynamic individuals in an industry who make all the difference.

Of course, there are some risks. And the Fund's price can go down as well as up. But the Elite Fund has initially spread its investment among some 19 different companies. So the risks are reduced. While the prospects of sustained growth are excellent.

Be a winner yourself. Invest now.

* (Calculated 1st January 1980 to 14th January 1987)

WHO ARE NUMBERS 1, 2, 3, 4 AND 5?

Are they, for instance, Burton's Sir Ralph Halpern, Dixons' Stanley Kalms, Hanson Trusts' Lord Hanson, Marks & Spencer's Lord Rayner, P & O's Sir Jeffrey Sterling?

Or are they a selection from the other 14 'winners' in the initial portfolio of the Elite Fund?

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55-57 High Holborn, London WC1V 6DU

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in the Regency Select Investment Bond, (linked to the Elite Fund).

A cheque made payable to Regency Life Assurance Company Limited is enclosed.

Name (Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Please tick the box if you wish to arrange for a regular income

Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Half Yearly ☐ Annually ☐

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) _____

First Applicant: _____

Joint Applicant: _____

I/We hereby apply to Regency Life for the Select Investment Bond and I/we agree that this application will form the basis of the contract between me/us and Regency Life. I/We hereby declare that I/we have read and understood the details given.

Signature _____

(Print name)

Signature _____

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Date: _____

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The minimum investment is £2,000, the maximum £100,000. Extra sums of as little as £500 may be added to your investment at any time.

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This is a special form of investment - an investment bond. Your money is used to buy 'units' in the Regency Select Investment Bond linked to the Elite Fund, and underwritten by Regency Life Assurance.

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Investment bonds have special tax advantages. You have no personal liability to either basic rate income tax or capital gains tax on any aspect of your investment. But you may have a liability to higher rate income tax when you partially or totally surrender your Bond. However, this can be reduced, or even avoided, by careful planning of encashments.

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Your Bond can also be used to provide a tax-free income - as long as you don't take more than 5% of your original investment in any one year.

Our Tax Liability

Partly, but only partly, offsetting these advantages is the fact that the Fund has to pay basic rate income tax on dividends, and capital gains tax on any holdings sold at a profit.

Charges

The initial management charge is 5% (plus a rounding adjustment) - reflected in the difference between 'bid' and 'offer' prices of units. The annual fund management charge is 4% (subject to a maximum of 1 1/4% of the value of the Fund).

All management and dealing costs are borne directly by the Fund.

Cashing Your Investment
You can cash some, or all, of your units at any time. The value of your units will be calculated at the 'bid' price prevailing on the day following receipt of your instructions.

This is intended to be a medium term investment. So, rather like a building society high interest deposit account, there is a small charge for very early withdrawals - 2% of the value of your units in the 1st year, 1% in the 2nd year, no charge thereafter. These deductions do not apply to regular withdrawals specified at the start.

Following the Progress of Your Investment
The 'bid' and 'offer' prices are normally published daily in the national press. You will also be sent annual statements showing the number and value of units you hold.

Regency Life is a member company of Transamerica Corporation - which currently has assets of around £10,000,000,000 internationally and its U.S. insurance subsidiary ranks as one of the top ten life and health insurers in North America.

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Follow the Leader

Johnson Fry will launch at least five major new BES issues in the next six weeks, suitable for higher rate taxpayer's investment in the tax year 1986/87.

These issues will have substantial minimum subscriptions in excess of £2.5 million each and are likely to be fully underwritten.

Johnson Fry's role as the largest sponsor of individual BES issues has been established over the last two years during which time they have raised over £40 million for 18 individual companies.

To obtain regular information on all new issues telephone Johnson Fry on 01-439 0924 or complete the coupon below.

SUMMARY OF RECENT ISSUES STILL OPEN (1-3) AND THOSE ANTICIPATED SHORTLY (4-6) FROM JOHNSON FRY

1. DIX BELGRAVIA	Property Dev/Construction	£3.2 M. subscribed to date.
2. COUNTRY RESORT HOTELS	Hotels in S.E.	£1.4 M. subscribed to date.
3. CAFE INNS	Pubs in North West	£0.9 M. subscribed to date.
4. EDINBURGH TANKERS	Specialist ships	Asset backed currency hedge.
5. UNICORN HERITAGE	Permanent Royalty exhibition	£4M. London-based attraction.
6. THAMES LINE	Thames waterbuses	Great potential. Fast river service.

Don't delay your investment too long, these issues may be fully subscribed.

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ALL ☐

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Johnson Fry plc - the BES experts

FAMILY MONEY/6

In the last of his series on inheritance tax, **WALTER SINCLAIR** deals with further opportunities for minimizing the tax.

More ways to cut the taxman out of your will

Certain transfers are in general exempt, whether made during your life or on death. Similar rules also apply to trusts. If you are able to make such exempt transfers, either in your lifetime or by your will, substantial inheritance tax (IHT) savings could result. The following are examples:

- Trading transactions which are exempt if allowed as deductions in computing the profits for income tax purposes.
- Gifts for national purposes made to certain bodies, and gifts for public benefit of property deemed by the Treasury to be of outstanding scenic, historic, scientific or artistic merit.

- Gifts to charities are exempt without limit. Gifts to charitable settlements are covered by the exemption, as are gifts to charities from other trusts.

- Gifts to political parties are wholly exempt if made more than a year before death; otherwise there is an exemption of £100,000 in total.

If you have a substantial estate, consider making large donations to charity during your lifetime, so that no IHT is paid, even if you die within seven years. Also, you should not overlook the advantages of making regular payments by deed of covenant, which will attract useful income tax benefits.

As well as the various transfers mentioned above being exempt from IHT, certain categories of property are "excluded" from your estate for these purposes. Excluded property escapes IHT, both during your life and on death. You should therefore invest in such property, particularly if you are non-domiciled.

The following are examples of "excluded property":

- Property outside the UK if you are non-domiciled for IHT purposes in this country. This has important planning applications.

- Some overseas pensions, from former colonies, for example, including death payments and returns of contributions.

- National Savings certificates and premium bonds, if you are domiciled in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

- Certain British government securities, provided you are neither domiciled nor ordinarily resident in the UK.

On the subject of exemptions, mention should be made of business and agricultural property relief. Depending on the circumstances, 50 or 30 per cent of the value of such property is omitted from your estate for IHT purposes.

Substantial IHT savings can result from a well drawn will. For example, you should ensure that, if possible, both your wife and yourself by your separate wills leave £71,000 to other people (not to each other) so that you each get the benefit of the nil rate band.

You must consider not only lifetime transfers which have borne tax, but also potentially exempt transfers (PETs) within the last seven years. As each of these becomes more than seven years old, the IHT which would be payable on your death changes.

You should then consider changing your will - perhaps leaving more to your children or grandchildren.

Avoid leaving too much directly to your children if they are already wealthy; better to leave money in trust for your grandchildren. Such trusts might be discretionary, or more usefully accumulation and maintenance settlements.

IHT is not charged on certain variations in the destination of property passing on death. Nor is it charged on the disclaimer of title to

property passing on death. The variation or disclaimer must be within two years of death. An election to the Inland Revenue is required within six months of the variation or disclaimer. As a result, the will is effectively rewritten for IHT and capital gains tax purposes as if the changes took effect at the date of death.

Variations and disclaimers are valuable IHT planning tools. Transfers free of IHT can be effected in this way so that, for example, if you are one of the legatees, you might arrange for money to go direct to your children.

If all the estate has gone to the widow under the will, then

visions for IHT purposes and can be used to counter many arrangements which otherwise would be successful in avoiding the tax.

If you have any plans to save IHT in a complicated way, you should always remember the associated operations rules.

Debts - Special IHT rules: In calculating the net value of your estate immediately before your death, certain debts may not be deductible if you have made connected gifts to the creditors. The rules cover debts before March 17, 1986.

For example, say you give property worth £40,000 to your son and borrow this amount back; the £40,000 debt will not be deductible from your estate when you die.

Gifts with reservations: If you have made a gift after March 17, 1986, but reserved some benefit, this will normally result in the property remaining yours for IHT purposes on your death.

However, if the reservation ends, you will be treated as making a PET at that time. Thus IHT could be due if you die within seven years.

A particular example is where you gift a house (other than to your spouse) but remain living there. The rule does not apply if your benefit is minimal (for example, you do not live in the house but pay only occasional visits).

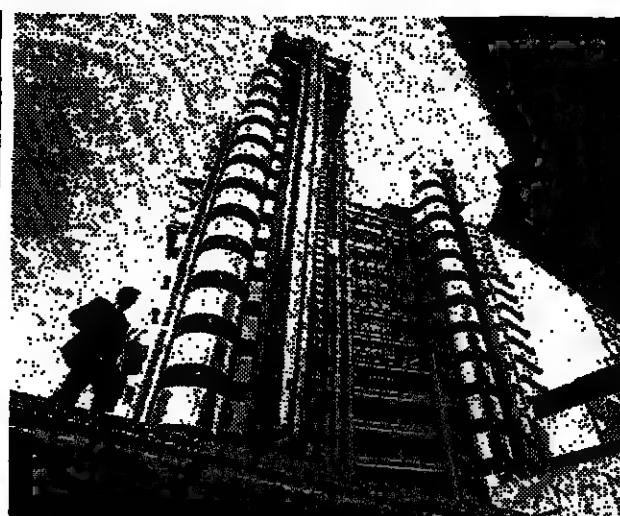
If you give full value for any benefit (say, pay a full rent for the house), the rule is also set aside.

The rules do not normally catch regular premium insurance policies made before March 18, 1986, and not altered since then.

Also outside the rules are certain exempt transfers including small gifts, inter-spouse gifts and marriage gifts, and gifts for charity, national purposes, public benefit, employee trusts and political parties.

Considerable care should be taken not to be caught by the provisions regarding gifts with reservations. As well as with the matrimonial home, problems may be encountered with investments, discretionary trusts, family companies, and some life assurance arrangements.

The author is a tax partner with chartered accountants *Kiddsons*, and co-author of the *Allied Dunbar Guide to Capital Taxes and Estate Planning*.



Lloyd's of London: all set for Sir Patrick's shake-up

The Lloyd's plan that should please

The report by Sir Patrick Neill and his committee of inquiry into "Regulatory Arrangements at Lloyd's" should please all but the most hawkish of Lloyd's names.

The market's most strenuous critics are disappointed that Sir Patrick has not seen fit to subject Lloyd's to the external supervisory authority of the Securities and Investments Board.

However, he has advocated shifting the balance of power within the council of Lloyd's, doing away with the majority held by the working members and increasing the number of nominated members, who have to be approved by the Bank of England.

The reconstituted council, which Lloyd's has promised to implement, will be 12 working members, eight nominated members and eight external members, instead of 16 working, four nominated and eight external. The nominated members are to be on all significant Lloyd's committees and the executive role of the elected chairs (working members) is to be reduced.

Sir Patrick's main reason for rejecting an external regulatory board was that Lloyd's was different from other investment markets, because it had to protect both policyholders and names, with the protection of policyholders being paramount. He denied that political exigencies dictated that his recommendations should all be possible within

the scope of the present Lloyd's Act.

The fact that all the recommendations can, however, be implemented by the council without further legislation means they can be implemented promptly. Some of the most important include:

- Introduction of a compensation scheme for names whose losses arise by means other than normal underwriting

- An ombudsman to deal with names' complaints against Lloyd's and a streamlined arbitration procedure to facilitate the investigation and resolution of names' money claims against their agents

- Greater choice for names to pick between agents and syndicates, aided by abolition of the "one agent one class of business" rule

- A mandatory deficit clause, whereby agents share in the losses as well as the profits of their names, and a standardization and full disclosure of agents' charges

- Tightening up rules against parallel syndicates, whereby the same underwriter or managing agents run two separate syndicates writing the same classes of business.

The Association of Lloyd's Members is delighted that the Neill report has taken all its submissions on board. It remains to be seen how many Lloyd's will implement, but its initial reaction is encouraging.

Alison Eadie



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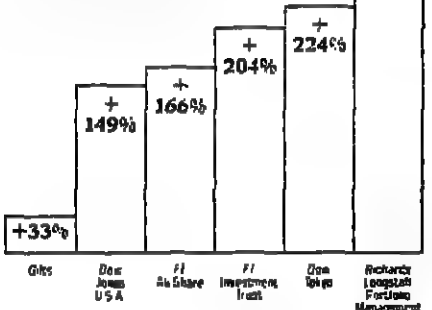
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A profitable marriage for the best man

This week **JOHN ROBERTS** turns the spotlight on the Nationwide Building Society and examines what its diversification plans will mean for more than five million savers in the light of its proposed link-up with the Anglia

"He's by far the brightest man in the entire building society movement," a colleague familiar with his personalities told me. "He is head and shoulders above the rest."

Certainly, that may be physically true of the more than 6ft tall Tim Melville-Ross but metaphorically, too, it probably holds good.

Almost a year after the collapse of its attempt to merge with the Woolwich Building Society, Nationwide last month announced its betrothal to the Anglia, itself the product of several previous mergers achieved not without difficulty.

How well can Mr Melville-Ross, nominated chief executive of the merged group, cope with a sharply increased scale of operations? There is, too, the possibility of sensitive personality issues. Anglia's chief general manager, Tony Stoughton-Harris, has proved quite able and willing to stand on his own feet.

Then there are commitments to provide a diverse range of financial services beyond simple mortgages, and the need to reconcile the rival computer network cash dispenser systems which the two societies use.

The difficulties might disturb a less determined man and it is not as if Nationwide — already Britain's third largest building society with assets of £11.9 billion — had not already proved itself with the means to exploit the new regulatory environment for building societies.

Moreover, Mr Melville-Ross has seemed ambivalent about how far Nationwide's transformation should go, being willing to embark on several commercial activities and yet unwilling to go the whole hog and become a quoted public company.

"We would prefer to stay as

we are in that respect," he told me. "We are more comfortable with the socially oriented mutual nature of the organization, for that is more in keeping with our customers' image of our culture."

"Personally, I have misgivings about the short-term perspectives towards investment by the institutions," says 42-year-old Mr Melville-Ross, who after 10 years with BP spent a few months in stockbroking just when the Stock Exchange suffered its sharpest ever decline in 1974. He then became Nationwide's company secretary and rose to director and general manager.

Why is it necessary to merge with Anglia?

"There are very large competitors that we have to cope with, not just other large building societies but also, increasingly, the banks," says Mr Melville-Ross.

"We are directly in competition now with the Barclays and Midlands of this world and unless we have the financial and other resources to cope with that, we aren't going to compete effectively."

Before the two months of



Stoughton-Harris

talks with Anglia began, Nationwide had already told its customers (and promised its staff) that from April it would start offering cheque books to its customers. These will bear no evidence of having been processed for clearing by the Co-op Bank, which is performing the same service for Abbey National and Girobank.

Mr Melville-Ross admits that this simple money transaction is unlikely ever to be profitable "but as we offer a more diverse range of services it is a core part of the operation, giving us the ability to handle the customer's ac-

FAMILY MONEY/7

count and through that account getting directly the information we need."

The more diverse range of services is dictated partly by competitive pressure.

"We have a ridiculously narrowly based balance sheet for an organization our size," Mr Melville-Ross said. "It is a peculiar way to run a business. We face increased competition in our traditional area from the banks and others offering a wider range of services."

"It would be easier for the banks to drive us out of the market than vice versa because the banks, for instance, could cross-subsidize from unsecured lending, which we can't do."

Nationwide's customer-owners had voted overwhelmingly in favour of their society extending its range of activities. More than 50 per cent of customers wanted it to offer cheque services, and sizeable minorities were in favour of the society undertaking estate agency work, handling conveyancing and offering personal loans.

A large number of people would also select Nationwide unit trusts rather than the competition but therein lies a trap for the unwary. Their reason was the perception that a Nationwide unit trust must be safer. In the nature of the beast, that cannot be.

"We've got to blow that idea out of the window," said Mr Melville-Ross, implying that cautions about the hazards of such investment would figure rather more prominently than usual in advertisements for any trusts offered.

Before the talks with Anglia began, Nationwide had shown no strong inclination towards financial supermarkets or share shops. Anglia, on the other hand, had not only progressed further on electronic funds transfer but had also announced a tie-up with stockbrokers Hoare Govett, with a pilot share-dealing service through 17 of its branches.

Nationwide's preference had been for staying closer to its last. Long before the law gave it freedom to take over estate agency firms, for instance, it had signed up provisional deals in anticipation.



Melville-Ross: 'Having to cope with very large competitors'

There is no room to accommodate them in the building society branches, so the string of firms signed up for their expertise and local goodwill will probably find themselves selling some forms of insurance.

Mr Melville-Ross had poached professionals from the insurance companies and

"Much to contribute to merged society"

now reckons that whereas the law still bars Nationwide from actually underwriting policies as an insurer, it could begin selling unit-linked policies with the small true insurance element contracted to a recognized company.

"That way we can get the business on to our balance sheets," said Mr Melville-Ross.

But whereas the company plans to bring the two automatic teller machine networks together, will it be able to reconcile such different diversification strategies and the personalities behind them? Mr Stoughton-Harris of Anglia has been through it all before.

"Although we're the junior partner in terms of size," he says, "we have a lot to contribute to the merged society and certainly experience, which has usually been from the small society going into something larger — we can

handle the sort of difficulties that might well arise."

Mr Melville-Ross says: "There are separate but complementary skills that we can both bring to what is genuinely a merger."

"We have got different plans and one of the great benefits of the merger is that we can pursue those different plans together without there being any significant clash at all."

But the capital demands of all these projects are prodigious and, given the requirement for a building society to maintain its appropriate capital ratio, that militates against Nationwide's retention of the mutual status Mr Melville-Ross cherishes.

Even before the Anglia agreement, however, he was toying with the idea that some of the various financial services could be spun off as separate quoted subsidiaries.

The Building Societies Act also limits to 5 per cent of the society's assets the amount it may commit to non-mortgage activities. Whereas the Act allows that limit to be raised over time, it seems unlikely to keep pace with Nationwide's expansion of financial services.

By agreeing the merger with Anglia, Mr Melville-Ross has given himself a larger asset base from which to calculate that 5 per cent.

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Pensions: will women do better?

The day of pension liberation draws enticingly nearer. If you are in employment, you could have a crucial decision to make about taking out a personal pension scheme (PPS), as the era of individual choice and pension portability is ushered in next year. FENNELL BETSON provides this update

The Inland Revenue and the Department of Health and Social Security are on the point of adding the finishing touches to their model PPS, which will be used to launch maybe a thousand pension packages in its likeness.

But before this happens, they have invited comments, and there are a number of points on which potential PPS users should take up this invitation.

From the Revenue's consultative document, *Improving the Pensions Choice*, and the DHSS draft regulations, we have some idea of the shape of the new pensions vehicle.

As far as benefits, contributions and tax treatment are concerned, the PPS is to be modelled on the S226 policy for the self-employed and those in non-pensionable employment.

The main difference is that

you will be able to use it if you opt to stay out of your employer's pension arrangements. You can also use it for contracting out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS). If you can persuade your employer, he can contribute to your PPS.

The benefits may be taken as a pension, at any age from 50 to 75 (the lower age limit is at present 60 under a S226), and as a lump sum of up to three times the remaining pension. Pension mortgages seem likely to have a much wider market.

Where your PPS is to be contracted out, that portion of your, and your employer's, National Insurance contributions (NIC) which would

Benefits to be taken in pension form

otherwise go to SERPS (or the total NIC rebate if you are in a contracted out scheme) will be directed by the DHSS to whichever institution is providing your PPS.

These contributions will secure what in DHSS parlance is called "protected rights". In other words, the benefits are restricted, in that they have to be taken in pension form only. No cash sum is to be allowed.

This pension can be taken only at the discriminatory age of 60 and after if you are a woman; 65 if you are a man.

You may be further cheered if you are female because the DHSS is insisting that unisex annuity rates be used to buy the pension.

However, the gains look as if they will be muted as not many men are likely to be able to retire before 65, and the rates will reflect the woman's predominance in the group. After 65, women retiring should do better, though most will probably have retired by then.

Unisex and unistatus rates are also to be used to provide, on death after retirement, a 50 per cent pension to a surviving spouse. So whether you are male or female, married or single, the same annuity rate is used. Bachelors aged 65 will not like that.

By the time you have complied with all these protected rights, the pension secured may not be that great. This is because the contributions will be limited to the NIC contracting-out rebate, applying only to the earnings band between £1,976 and £14,820.

At present, this rebate is 6.25 per cent of this band — split 2.15 per cent to the employee and 4.1 per cent to the employer — but this is expected to be reduced to around 5.5 per cent next year.

Provided you have not been in a contracted-out employer's scheme for the previous two years, you will qualify for an



additional 2 per cent NIC rebate bonus, payable for five years from April 1988 if you decide to take a PPS and contract out.

The overall amount you will be allowed to contribute to a PPS is to be set at 17.5 per cent of earnings (higher for those aged 51 and over), though if you are contracting out, the NIC rebate contributions are not counted towards the limit.

Up to 5 per cent of earnings, as with S226 policies, can be used to buy life cover, though this comes from the 17.5 per cent limit. Any employer's contributions will be within these limits.

Full tax relief will be obtainable on your contributions — and you should get basic rate relief immediately once your employer supplies the necessary certificates.

The system the Revenue is adopting follows the pattern of mortgage interest relief at source (MIRAS).

It is being nicknamed PIRAS — and you will pay your contributions net of basic tax to the PPS provider, which, incidentally, can include a bank, building society or unit trust group as well as an insurance company or friendly society.

They will collect the tax relief directly from the Rev-

enue but should credit you with the full investment once the contribution is received.

For the contracted-out portion, the DHSS will collect the tax relief due from the Revenue and pass this to the PPS provider, along with its NIC rebate payment. The indications are that this process could take more than a year in some cases and on average about nine months, which means a long time before the investment takes place.

But the most restrictive aspect in the proposals is that the Revenue is limiting you to one PPS provider at a time. You will be able to change from provider to provider, by ceasing the first PPS and taking out another.

There is some doubt as to whether this means you will be able to have only one PPS contract "live" at a time, or just one PPS provider who will be able to offer a range of contracts.

But either way, this proposal as it stands would make serious inroads into your ability to have a range of live PPS in order to give yourself a balanced portfolio of investment links.

No one institution is going to be the best performer across the board. The Revenue needs to rethink this restriction, as it could impose severe limits on your ability to provide for your future.

For those who decide to stay within their employer's scheme, it would be logical to allow them to contribute to their own PPS-type arrangement rather than having to put their contributions into their employer's additional voluntary contribution scheme.

As freedom and choice are the watchwords in this discussion, it seems harsh that something more of an opportunity to exercise these options is not going to be available.

If you are quick about it, you can pass your views to the taxman. Send them to Philip Clarke, Inland Revenue, Policy Division 2, Room 23 New Wing, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LB, by next Friday.

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The Cheltenham Security & Growth Plan is in two parts: a C&G High Interest Account and the Cheltenham UK Growth Trust. The minimum investment is \$5,000 which, for total security is paid into the C&G High Interest Account and earns the same rate as that paid in the Society's highly competitive Cheltenham Gold Monthly Interest Account. Interest, paid monthly is automatically transferred to buy units in the Cheltenham UK Growth Trust, a fund of selected major British companies and Government backed securities managed by Gartmore Fund Managers Ltd. The aim is to produce long term capital growth, utilising Gartmore's expertise.

EASY TO OPERATE

The plan is as simple to operate as an ordinary building society account with transactions entered in your special passbook. There is no lengthy paperwork to worry about, because we do all the work.

The prices of units are available either from your C&G branch or the quality daily papers, so monitoring your account couldn't be simpler. The price of units and the income from them may go down as well as up.

FLEXIBILITY, INSTANT ACCESS

Any sum invested above the minimum of \$5,000 can be allocated to either part of the plan and you may withdraw or add to your investment at any time, without penalty.

GARTMORE'S PEDIGREE

Gartmore is one of the country's leading independent investment companies, with total funds under management in excess of £2,700 million, and is one of the top performers in Unit Trust management.

SPECIAL FIXED PRICE START-UP OFFER

Until 6th February the purchase price of units in the Cheltenham UK Growth Trust will be held at 25p per unit, offering the perfect opportunity to enter the stock market. As the Trust's main aim is growth, the estimated gross yield as at 15th January 1987 was 2.0%.

THE NEXT STEP

For more details simply return the coupon or call into your nearest branch of the Cheltenham & Gloucester. You can even operate your account from home with our C&G By Post service.

Either way you'll find the Cheltenham Security & Growth Plan the breakthrough in investment planning you've been waiting for.

CHEL TENHAM SECURITY & GROWTH PLAN

To: Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society,
FREEPOST, Cheltenham, Glos. GL53 1BR.

I would like to know more about the Cheltenham Security & Growth Plan. Can you please send me more details.

Full Name(s) Mr/Mrs/Miss _____

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Postcode _____

SAUT 75-1

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*This figure is based on a growth rate of 7.5% per annum, after charges.

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Bristol BS1 6YJ, _____
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C&G Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society

CHIEF OFFICE: CHELTENHAM HOUSE, CLARENCE STREET, CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL51 1RN. TEL: 0242 36161.
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* Planned Savings survey, November 1986.

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FREEPOST

Westminster Bridge Road,

London SE1 2BR

Getting your credit with care

OVERDRAFTS

If you have succumbed to the temptations of the January sales or the lure of the ski slopes, your bank account may be overdrawn. AMANDA PARDOE spells out the consequences

Running up an overdraft is no laughing matter. It is always expensive and it can be embarrassing.

Where a customer runs up an unauthorized overdraft, the banks are bound by law to pay only correctly drawn cheques which have been written with the support of a cheque guarantee card. The manager has every right to "bounce" any other cheques, or standing orders, for that matter, on that account. The fact that you may have sufficient funds on another account to cover these transactions is irrelevant.

Usually, however, the banks return cheques only as a last resort, and even then they have to be careful to check that no mistakes have been made on their part. If a bank bounces your cheque in error, you could sue it for breach of contract.

As well as acting cautiously, the banks also tend to be fairly considerate. If, for example, several cheques are presented which, if taken individually, could be paid, but when combined result in an overdraft, the bank will usually examine the payees and return those which are likely to cause the least trouble. An electricity bill would, therefore, be paid in preference to a cheque written to an individual.

Attention is also given to the wording used on a returned cheque. The least offensive is where the bank can pick on a technical flaw. For instance, although it is fairly common practice to overlook cheques that are dated with the wrong year in the early days of January,

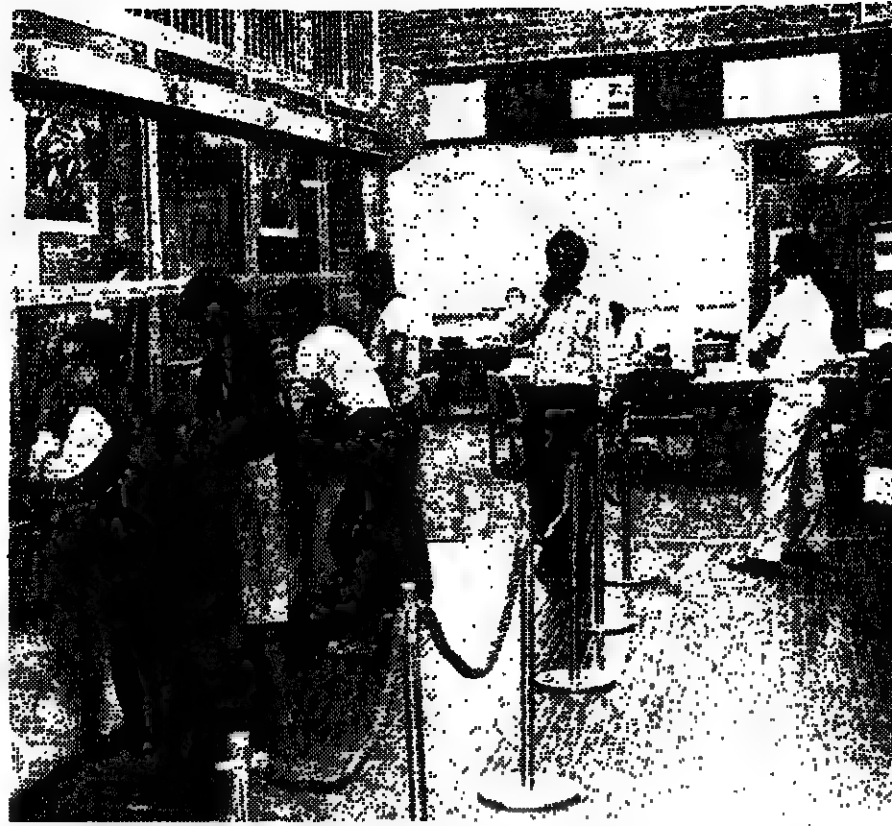
Returning cheques creates extra work

these could be returned, where appropriate, for being "out of date".

A stronger, frequently used expression, is "Return to drawer, please re-present." In everyday language this means: "The drawer does not have sufficient money at present, but is expected to in due course."

Where a cheque is repeatedly re-presented and has to be returned again and again, the bank will usually resort to the short and simple instruction to "return to drawer". The accepted interpretation of this is: "We suggest you contact the drawer and find out if he has any other way of paying you."

Returning cheques creates extra work for the bank, and not surprisingly, the costs incurred are passed on to the



The polite atmosphere of the bank — where overdrawn can damage your reputation

customer. Barclays and the Midland charge £7.50 per cheque, National Westminster charges £8.50, and returns for customers of Lloyds or TSB cost £10 each.

Usually, when cheques are bounced, the account holder is also sent a standardized letter outlining the extent of the overdraft and requesting remedial action.

The tone used in such letters reflects the bank's opinion of the situation, and the charge for the letter may vary accordingly. With Midland, the minimum is £5. Lloyds charges £5.10 and Barclays £5.80, while at TSB it is £10 a letter. National Westminster debits the customer's account with £3.50 for a standardized letter, and £7.50 where a personalized one has been written.

These charges, of course, take the account further into the red — and don't forget that all the banks levy a penal rate of interest on unauthorized overdrafts.

At Barclays and TSB, this is currently base rate plus 12, that is, 23 per cent. Midland and National Westminster on the other hand use a managed rate of 24.5 per cent and 25 per cent respectively, while Lloyds charges 2 per cent per month.

And that's not all. Once an account has dropped out of credit, all debit transactions throughout the quarterly charging period — monthly in the case of Lloyds — have to be paid for. At Barclays, it is 29p per debit. Lloyds 20p, National Westminster 25p and TSB 27p. Midland charges 28p for cheques and standing orders, and 25p for autobank withdrawals and direct debits.

Usually, there is also a fixed handling charge of between £2.50 and £3 a quarter, depending on the bank used. It takes only a moment to realize the alarming rate at which these charges can add up. But the cost of going over-

drawn without permission and having your cheques or other debits returned is not only financial. Your image will be instantly tarnished in the eyes of the payee. What is more, the banks tend to have elephantine memories, and your creditworthiness will be indelibly amended to show any returned items.

Cheques honoured by agreement

A "one-off" fall from grace may be overlooked, but where a customer has a reputation for going overdrawn without permission, the chances of being granted loans or other credit in the future are seriously jeopardized. Remember, too, that bank references are always sought by finance houses.

Of course, these problems

arise only where a customer creates an unauthorized overdraft. By agreeing a limit on your account with the bank manager — and sticking to it — you can rest assured that your cheques will be honoured, your creditworthiness will remain intact, and, what is more, the interest rate will be considerably lower.

The actual rate charged on agreed overdrafts varies from one bank to another. It also depends on how valuable a customer you are. At the moment, you could expect to be charged in the region of base rate plus between three and seven, that is, 14 to 18 per cent plus an arrangement fee. Lloyds has recently started a new system, under which the rate is 1.6 per cent a month. National Westminster has also introduced its Credit Zone, whereby a permanent overdraft can be arranged.

The managed rate for this is currently 18.5 per cent, and there is a commission charge of £5 for any quarter in which the facility is used.

But, regardless of whether an overdraft is authorized, customers with Midland and Lloyds cannot avoid the transaction charges. Barclays and TSB, however, will waive these where the average minimum balance during the quarter is £500 or £400, respectively. National Westminster on the other hand, takes 4 per cent of the average credit balance and offsets this against any transaction charges due. Then, if the resultant figure is below £2, it is overlooked.

The moral, therefore, is to avoid an overdraft if you possibly can, and if you can't, spare the time to get it approved. That way you will save money, and your reputation too.



AN OUTSTANDING INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY FROM SKIPTON BUILDING SOCIETY

20.3%

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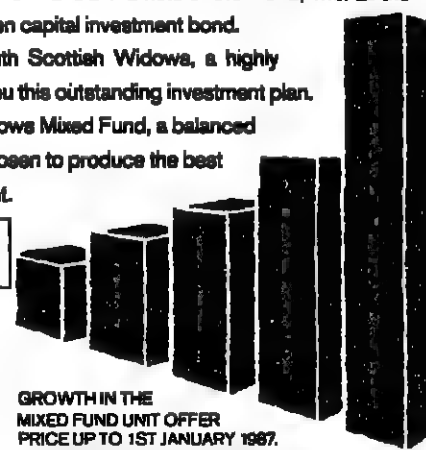
Skipton Building Society has joined with Scottish Widows, a highly reputable life assurance company, to offer you this outstanding investment plan.

Your money will go into the Scottish Widows Mixed Fund, a balanced portfolio of UK and overseas investments, chosen to produce the best results consistent with responsible investment.

CONSISTENT GROWTH

Outstanding growth is the aim of this investment and, as you can see from the bar chart right, that has been achieved.

Of course past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance and it must be remembered that unit values can go down as well as up. But this investment has been consistently successful over the past five years, and there is no foreseeable reason why it should not continue to work hard for you.



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FREEPOST, SKIPTON, NORTH YORKS. BD23 1BR.

Please send me full details of your Capital Growth Plan. I am over 18 years old.

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BUSINESS EXPANSION SCHEME

Invest with the leader

Lazard Brothers have launched The Seventh Lazard Development Capital Fund, their final BES fund for the 1986/87 tax year.

The Fund's investment policy and the tax concessions of the BES together provide an outstanding investment opportunity for higher rate tax payers.

Total funds raised by Lazard Brothers under the BES now exceed £22.8 million — the largest amount

raised by any manager of approved BES funds — and investments have been made in 43 companies. In the last tax year, Lazard Brothers raised and invested £7 million under the BES, which represented more than 25 per cent. of the total money raised through approved BES funds.

To obtain further details of the Fund, please telephone Jane Lamont on 01-588-2721 or send her the coupon below.

THE ADVANTAGES OF INVESTING IN THE LAZARD DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL FUNDS ARE:

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3. The manager's involvement in monitoring companies which is designed to reduce the risk of losses
4. The well balanced spread of investments
5. The emphasis given to planning the realisation of investments

The application list will close on 9 February 1987 but may be closed earlier at the manager's discretion.

To: Jane Lamont, Lazard Development Capital Limited,
21 Moorfields, London EC2P 2HT

Please send me a Memorandum describing The Seventh Lazard Development Capital Fund

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

This advertisement does not constitute an invitation to subscribe to the Fund. Applications to subscribe will be accepted only on the basis of the terms and conditions set out in the Memorandum describing the Fund. Investment in unquoted companies carries higher risks as well as the chance of higher rewards.

Lazard Brothers & Co., Limited

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2 St Mary's Lane,
London EC3A 8BP

Name _____
Address _____

FAMILY MONEY/10

INTEREST RATES ROUND-UP

	Return at tax rates			Min/max			Investment £	Notice	Contact
	25%	45%	60%						
BANKS									
Deposit A/c:									
Barclays	5.00	3.87	2.82	1 min	7 day	01-626 1567			
Lloyds	5.00	3.87	2.82	1 min	7 day	01-626 1560			
National Westminster	5.00	3.87	2.82	1 min	7 day	01-626 1000			
Midland	5.00	3.87	2.82	1 min	7 day	01-260 8000			
TSB	5.00	3.87	2.82	1 min	7 day	01-600 6000			
National Girobank	5.00	3.87	2.82	1 min	7 day	01-600 6020			
Fixed Term Deposits:									
National Westminster	7.63	5.91	4.30	10,000-24,999	1 mth	01-726 1000			
"	7.38	5.72	4.16	10,000-24,999	3 mth	01-726 1000			
"	7.38	5.72	4.16	10,000-24,999	6 mth	01-726 1000			
Midland	9.88	7.46	5.43	10,000-24,999	1 mth	01-260 8000			
"	9.38	7.27	5.28	10,000-24,999	3 mth	01-260 8000			
"	9.25	7.17	5.36	10,000-24,999	6 mth	01-260 8000			

BUILDING SOCIETIES

Ordinary A/c	6.00	4.65	3.38	1 min		
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MONEY FUNDS

Alfred Hume Monthly Income	7.66	5.93	4.32	1,000 min		01-638 6070
Bank of Scotland	7.66	5.93	4.32	2,500 min		01-626 8060
Barclays High Rate Deposit	7.13	5.52	4.02	1,000 min		01-626 1567
Cater Allen Call	7.63	5.91	4.30	10,000 min		01-626 1567
HFC Trust	7.66	5.93	4.32	2,500 min		01-626 2777
Henderson Money Mkt Cheq A/c	8.50	6.58	4.79	5,000 min		01-638 5757
L & G High Interest Deposit	8.15	6.31	4.59	1,000 min	1 mth	01-388 3211
Lloyds HICA	7.70	5.96	4.34	2,500 min		01-626 1500
M&G HICA	7.56	5.86	4.26	2,500 min		01-626 4588
Midland HICA	7.70	5.96	4.34	2,500 min		0742 52800
Net West High Int Special Res	7.83	5.91	4.30	10,000 min		01-726 1000
Oppenheimer Money Mgmt A/c	7.75	6.00	4.37	1,000 min	1 mth	01-236 9382
Royal Bank of Scotland Prem A/c	7.94	6.14	4.47	10,000 min	1 mth	01-236 9382
S & P Call	7.75	6.00	4.37	2,500 min		031-5570201
Schroder Wagg	7.48	5.89	4.23	500-1,000 min		0708 66966
Tullet & Riley Call	7.58	5.80	4.20	2,500 min	1 mth	0705 827733
Tullet & Riley 7-day	7.83	5.93	4.32	10,000 min	1 mth	01-236 9382
Tyndall Call	8.05	6.24	4.54	2,500 min	7 day	01-236 9382
Tyndall 7-day	7.91	6.13	4.46	2,500 min	7 day	0272 732241
UDT 7-day	7.92	6.14	4.46	2,500 min	7 day	0272 732241
Western Trust	7.87	6.10	4.44	2,500 min	7 day	01-626 4661

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Investment A/c	8.34	6.46	4.79	5-100,000	1 mth	041-6494555
Income Bond	8.79	6.74	4.90	2,000-100,000	3 mth	0253 66151
Deposit Bond	8.70	6.74	4.99	100-100,000	3 mth	041-6494555
Indexed Income Bond	5.68	4.40	3.20	5,000-100,000	3 mth	0253 66151
2nd Issue Certificate	8.75	6.75	8.75	25-5,000	8 day	0385 64900
Yearly Plan	8.75	6.75	8.75	20-200 a mth	14 day	0385 64900
General Extension Rate	8.70	6.70	8.70			

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

General Portfolio	8.10	7.05	5.13	1,000 min	1 yr	Note *
General Portfolio	8.10	7.05	5.13	1,000 min	2 yrs	Note *
General Portfolio	8.10	7.05	5.13	1,000 min	3 yrs	Note *
Providence Capital	8.25	7.17	5.21	1,000 min	5 yrs	Note *
Pinnacle Insurance (A)	8.25	7.17	5.21	5,000 min	5 yrs	Note *

LOCAL AUTHORITY TOWN HALL BONDS

Reading	7.50	5.81	4.23	1,000 min	1 yr	01-638 6361
Kirkcaldy	8.38	6.49	4.72	500 min	2 yrs	01-638 6361
Kirkcaldy	8.38	6.49	4.72	500 min	3 yrs	01-638 6361
Kirkcaldy	8.38	6.49	4.72	500 min	4 yrs	01-638 6361
Bournemouth	8.25	6.39	4.65	500 min	5 yrs	01-638 6361
Nottingham	8.20	6.35	4.62	500 min	6 yrs	01-638 6361
Nottingham	8.20	6.35	4.62	500 min	7 yrs	01-638 6361
Vale of Glamorgan	8.13	4.75	3.45	500 min	8 yrs	01-638 6361
Telford	8.21	4.81	3.50	1,000 min	9 yrs	01-638 6361
Telford	8.21	4.81	3.50	1,000 min	10 yrs	01-638 6361

FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS

Sterling	10.14			7 day	0481 26741
US Dollar	5.38			7 day	0481 26741
Yen	8.15			7 day	0481 26741
D Mark	5.38			7 day	0481 26741
French Franc	5.38			7 day	0481 26741
Swiss Franc	5.38			7 day	0481 26741

*Interest Taxable, paid gross. *Taxable. *T.D. (Other banks may differ). (2) Extra interest accounts usually pay 1-2 per cent above ordinary accounts. (3) Returned at end of year in line with rate of inflation. (4) December 1979 figures. (5) Returns for higher rate savers, only differ according to type of bond and above rates should be taken as a general guide only. (6) Research: Deborah Dwyer 01-622 9080.

Investors get a call for help

Thousands of investors, mostly in the North, were asked this week to help with the financial situation at the troubled insurance, property and investment group, Charley Davies, by the country's first court-appointed administrator under the new Insolvency Act.

The legislation, which came into force earlier this month, gives the administrator a mandate to gauge the possibility of a rescue. If he finds it unable to stage a recovery, he recommends to have it wound up.

Ministry of the Interior, after the collapse of the Canterbury investment house McDonald Wheeler last summer, investors were keen to know what was going on at Charley Davies when the courts appointed an official administrator, Tony Richmond, of accountants Peat Marwick Mitchell, on January 16.

Mr Richmond disclosed that Charley Davies was carrying a £2.6 million overdraft. His team is working to establish what went wrong and he hopes to give a fuller picture in a few weeks.

But until new financial services legislation is in place later this year, the watchdog body for licensed dealers, the Financial Intermediaries, Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association, offers no compensation, leaving Charley Davies investors in an uncertain position until its financial status clears.

The group's London-based stockbroking subsidiary, Giles and Overbury, which ceased trading on Monday, was found to owe about £3.5 million. How big the deficit will be when settlements are completed is unclear, but any investors' losses will be met by the Stock Exchange compensation scheme.

But all is not gloom for Charley Davies investors. Mr Richmond wants to keep the businesses running where possible, and is promoting management buyouts while paying back outgoings. Comfort may also be drawn from the fact that the directors sought an administrator, rather than waiting for total collapse.

There are about 4,000 clients with the group's £20 million non-discretionary funds and a much smaller number in its £10 million discretionary fund.

Colin Narbrough

EXTRA
UNIT UP TO
5th APRIL

Unit Trust choice simplified

With over nine hundred unit trusts available and more being launched each month, how do you know which to choose? In reality there are only three basic types of unit trust, and M&G has an outstandingly successful example of each: Recovery Fund for capital growth, Dividend Fund for an increasing income, and SECOND General for a balance between income and growth.

You should remember that new funds or funds which suffer a change of management are likely to be more of a gamble than those which can point to a long and successful record. M&G's investment team has remained largely unchanged for many years, and our long-term performance record reflects this. Past performance cannot be a guarantee for the future, but it is usually the best measure you have of a fund's likelihood of achieving its objective.

We are offering an extra 1% unit allocation if you invest £1,000 or more and 2% if you invest £10,000 or more per Fund.

The price of units and the income from them may go down as well as up. This means that unit trusts are a long-term investment and not suitable for money you may need at short notice.

Growth RECOVERY FUND

M&G Recovery Fund is probably the most successful unit trust ever launched and the table below shows just how well it has achieved its aim of capital growth. The Fund buys the shares of companies which have fallen on hard times. Losses must be expected when a company fails to recover but the effect of a turnaround can be dramatic.

COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE TABLE Value of £10,000 invested at the launch of M&G Recovery Fund on 23rd May 1969, with net income reinvested				
Year ended 31 DECEMBER	M&G RECOVERY	FT ORDINARY INDEX	RETAIL PRICE INDEX	BUILDING SOCIETY
23 May '69	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
1970	11,760	8,570	11,020	11,058
1975	26,400	11,121	21,283	16,178
1980	102,580	17,287	40,175	25,521
1985	270,800	49,474	55,233	40,164
1 Jan '87	401,520	58,864	57,172	43,208*

NOTES: All figures include reinvested income net of basic rate tax. The Building Society figures are based on an extra interest account opening 1st Jan 1969. M&G Recovery figures are all realisation values. *Estimated.

FURTHER INFORMATION: On 20th January 1987 offered prices and estimated gross current yields were:

	Income	Accumulation	Yield
Recovery Fund	431.5p	565.3p	3.06%
Dividend Fund	474.5p	643.1p	4.80%
SECOND General	623.6p	1649.6p	3.37%

Prices and yields appear daily in the Financial Times. The difference between the 'offered' price (at which you buy units) and the 'bid' price (at which you sell) is normally 5p. An initial charge of 5% is included in the offered price and an annual charge of up to 1% of each fund's value - currently 0.4% - plus VAT is deducted from gross income. Income for accumulation units is reinvested to increase their value and for income units it is distributed net of basic rate tax on the following dates:

	Recovery	Dividend	SECOND
Distributions	30 Feb	15 Jan	Feb
	30 Aug	15 July	15 Aug
Next distribution for new investors	1987	1987	1987

You can buy or sell units on any business day. Contracts for purchase or sale will be due for settlement two to three weeks later. Redemption is subject to agreed terms. Rates are available on request. The Trustee for Dividend and Recovery is Barclays Bank, Trust Co. Limited and for SECOND is Lloyds Bank Plc. The Funds are all wide-range investments and are authorised by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

M&G Securities Limited, M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1PB. Tel: 0245 266266. Advisory Services: 01-626 4548. Member of the Unit Trust Association.

Income DIVIDEND FUND

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COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE TABLE Value of £10,000 invested at the launch of M&G Dividend Fund on 23rd May 1969, with net income reinvested				
Year ended 31 DECEMBER	M&G DIVIDEND	BUILDING SOCIETY	M&G DIVIDEND	BUILDING SOCIETY
23 May '69	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
1970	13,820	20,080	11,293	12,183
1975	31,320	26,330	13,492	16,093
1980	46,480	30,540	17,143	21,636
1985	79,840	39,620	33,107	31,951
1 Jan '87	119,400	61,600	62,494	49,931
	146,000	78,240	59,918	75,380
	174,680	109,680	88,934	84,335*

NOTES: All figures include reinvested income net of basic rate tax. The Building Society figures are based on an extra interest account opening 1st Jan 1969. M&G Dividend figures are all realisation values. *Estimated.

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COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE TABLE Value of £10,000 invested at the launch of M&G SECOND General on 23rd May 1969, with net income reinvested				
Year ended 31 DECEMBER	M&G SECOND	FT ORDINARY INDEX	RETAIL PRICE INDEX	BUILDING SOCIETY
23 May '69	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
1970	13,820	8,570	11,020	11,058
1975	31,320	11,121	21,283	16,178
1980	102,580	17,287	40,175	25,521
1985	270,800	49,474	55,233	40,164
1 Jan '87	401,520	58,864	57,172	43,208*

NOTES: All figures include reinvested income net of basic rate tax. The Building Society figures are based on an extra interest account opening 1st Jan 1969. M&G SECOND General figures are all realisation values. *Estimated.

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A contract note will be sent to you stating exactly how much you owe and the settlement date. Your certificate will follow shortly.

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DATE _____
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FAMILY MONEY

This summer, just switch homes

HOLIDAYS

Your home may be modest, and it may be mortgaged, but make it work for you. Use it to give your family their best ever holiday, says ROSEMARY WELLS

I'm not suggesting you sell it, or take out a second mortgage — nothing nearly so drastic. Swap it! Your reaction to such a suggestion could be to turn the page, but let's look at this in the sober light of a Saturday morning.

You want to take your family to Europe? But you know that even a package tour will probably put you in the red again. You start saving, then you worry about what to do with the house while you are away. Will it be safe? Who will feed the cat? And water the garden?

You also discover the cost of the dog kennels has doubled. The whole project becomes less inviting. Is 1987 going to be your family's year for the great new experience of a holiday at home?

The family do not take readily to the idea — and in fact it is one that can cost you dearly. Think of all those cinema outings and trips to this swimming pool and that theme park that you will be expected to finance in the long summer holidays. Then there are the children's friends who constantly stay for lunch, supper, the weekend... food bills alone could pay for a flight to Majorca.

We faced this problem with a growing family, until one year we exchanged our three-bedroom house in the Home Counties for a similar-sized

home in France. Not a penny changed hands. All we had to find was the cost of our fares which, by ferry or hovercraft with a family squeezed into a not-too-large car, is not that great. That was the total sum of our expenses.

The joy of it all was that I left my house without having to empty the larder and the fridge, left our dog and cat in their familiar surroundings (some families even swap cars if travelling across to the United States or Australia), and had no need to cancel the milk. My only chore was to hand our keys to a neighbour as arranged with our French guests.

Risks involved? No greater than renting your home — and in fact the experience of those who arrange such holidays is that people tend to take far greater care of homes that are exchanged rather than rented! After all, you have their house as surety!

It is a good idea to tell your neighbours who is coming — often they or their children make good friends. And remember to leave your guests a list of local shops, restaurants, sports facilities, doctors and tourist attractions.

They will do the same for you, and that way you get to know their country far better than you would if you stayed in a hotel or on a camp site. Our neighbours in France helped me to find the best markets, allowed our children to pick their cherries and borrow their bikes, made us feel part of the village, and were always ready to help if the boiler failed or the French telephone system flamed up!

Some families advertise and swap their homes privately, but by subscribing to a holiday exchange organization, you



France in summer: all this could be yours for a few weeks under the home-swap scheme

will get a wonderful selection of properties, world-wide, and be able to circulate details of your home to thousands of others.

We had offers from the United States and Italy, from Australia and Norway. Some homes were offered with indoor pools, saunas, tennis courts, sailing boats, horses, and live-in maids!

The children fancied a ranch in California, and I must admit to being tempted by a luxury flat in Rome. But the idea of this whole enterprise being to economize, we settled for a short journey and a house just nine kilometres from Paris.

We wrote to the family, who turned out to consist of a

husband and wife, both school teachers, with a nine-year-old daughter. We exchanged letters, and they soon became Suzanne and Alain as though old friends.

When we arrived the fridge contained all the basic foods and there was a deliciously ripe cheese and a bottle of wine on the kitchen table.

What a delight it is to holiday in a comfortable home — no worry about hotel meals for children, no queuing for camp facilities, no being tourists in a pension filled with fellow countrymen.

We spent lazy days in their garden, or walking along the banks of the Seine, and discovered that Paris museums are free on Sundays! The children quickly made friends and our French improved considerably.

The arranging of the exchange is up to you. Write to as many subscribers as you wish, select the most mutually attractive, exchange references and discuss final details.

You may not be a family man — in which case you can offer your immaculate flat in exchange for a penthouse apartment in New York.

You may want to make this the holiday of a lifetime — so take advantage of party bookings and fly the whole family. In-laws included, to a ranch in southern Spain or western Canada.

Maybe you have five children and a rambling old house in London, so why not exchange it for a rambling old

farm in Wales — a wonderful change for both families, and it will cost you only a tank or so of petrol!

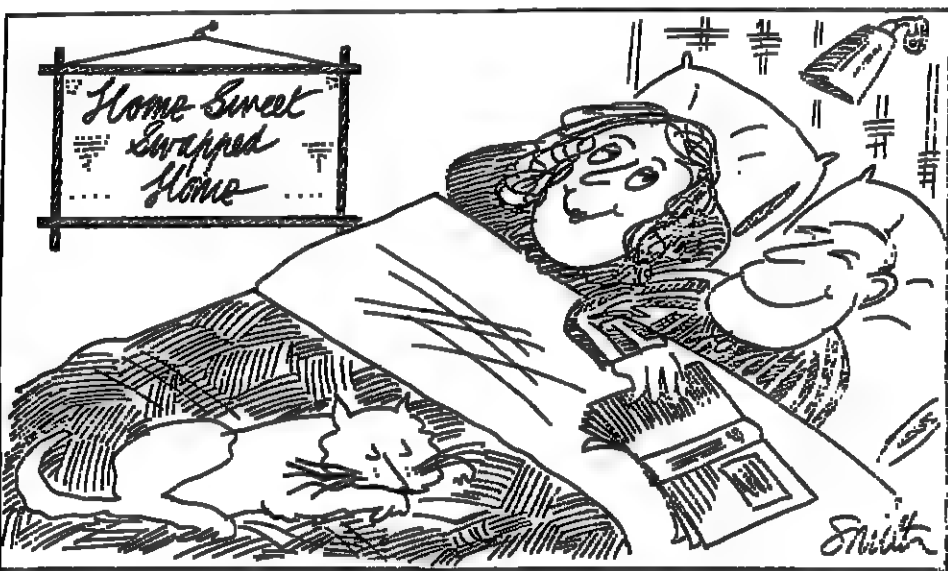
There are other possibilities such as renting, or you can offer bed and breakfast or try weekend exchanges in order to sample an area before buying a holiday villa. Hospitality is another service. This means having paying guests, in which case your home can not only save, but also make you money!

For those with teenagers, there is also a youth hospital-ity service when you offer a cross-cultural experience to a foreign teenager who will reciprocate for your son or daughter.

Once you start thinking of exchange holidays you will become more and more ambitious. And with careful account-keeping you may well find your holiday has cost you even less than you expected — especially if you have chosen a country where food costs less than in Britain.

And think of all that money saved on boarding kennels and catteries...

For further information: Home Interchange, 8 Hillside, Farnham, Kent DA4 0DD (0322) 864527; Global Home Exchange and Travel Service, 36 The Mall, Farnham, Surrey GU10 1AA (0322) 864527; Home Interchange, 101-103 Highfield Road, Derby (0332) 436641; International Home Exchange Service, 6 Siddals Lane, Alfreton, Derby (0332) 558931.



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Pages of PEPs for the picking

Who is going to be first to publish a book on L'Affaire Guineenne? That is the question now being asked in the watering holes of EC3 where the betting among Big Bang survivors is that the book will be called anything but *The Guinness Book of Record Resignations*.

Of more immediate concern to most private investors is: "Who is going to be first to publish a comprehensive guide to personal equity plans?" Well, now we have the answer and most welcome it is too.

Rosemary Burr's 128-page PEPs guide published this week provides details of 38 plans, divided into three categories — advisory, discretionary and unit trusts only. There is a question-and-answer section plus tips on how to assess the wide variety of charges.

It is inevitable that as soon as a PEPs guide is published it becomes out of date. Rosemary Burr's guide includes the Framlington unit trust PEP, which is officially launched today, but not the new PEP from financial services house Smith & Williamson. This is a discretionary scheme with a fixed investment of £2,400. The idea is that this sum will be split 75-25 as between equities and unit trusts.

PG

* Guide to Personal Equity Plans 1987 available from Rosters Ltd, 60 Welbeck Street, London W1; £3.99 plus 50p for p&p, or direct from W.H. Smith and leading bookshops

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TSB	11.00%
Citibank NA	11.00%

† Mortgage Base Rate.

Power to grant leave to serve writ outside jurisdiction

Islamic Arab Insurance Co v Saudi Egyptian American Reinsurance Co
Before Lord Justice Parker and Lord Justice Bingham
(Judgment January 21)

On an application for leave to serve a writ out of the jurisdiction under Order 11, rule 1 of the Rules of the Supreme Court, the court had jurisdiction to grant leave if the plaintiff showed a good arguable case that the claim was in respect of a contract made within the jurisdiction or that English law was the proper law of the contract.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing an appeal by the plaintiffs, Islamic Arab Insurance Co, from a decision of Mr Justice Slynn on April 9, 1986.

Mr Jeremy L. Cooke for the plaintiffs, Dr Dominic Kendrick for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE PARKER said that the plaintiff had granted leave *ex parte* to issue a writ against the defendants, Saudi Egyptian American Reinsurance Co, and to serve it on them out of the jurisdiction.

The writ claimed sums of money allegedly due under a fire reinsurance treaty and an engineering reinsurance treaty respectively.

The defendants applied to set aside the writ. The judge ordered that all further proceedings be stayed conditional upon the Saudi Arabian courts assuming jurisdiction.

The plaintiffs appealed. Two questions arose for decision: (a) whether the claim fell within any of the paragraphs of Order 11, rule 1 so as to give the court jurisdiction to give leave to serve out of the jurisdiction; and (b) whether, if so, it was a proper case in which to exercise that jurisdiction in favour of the plaintiffs.

The judge held that there was a good arguable case that the contracts were made in England and thus that there was jurisdiction to give leave to serve out of the jurisdiction.

He rejected the other two

grounds relied on by the plaintiffs to found jurisdiction holding that the contracts were governed by the law of Saudi Arabia, not by English law, and that no breach within the jurisdiction had been established.

The plaintiffs challenged the judge's finding with regard to the proper law of the contract, and the defendants by respondent's notice challenged his finding with regard to the place where the contracts were made contending that they were made in Saudi Arabia.

The plaintiffs asserted that, although the reinsurance was agreed in principle by Telex and oral exchanges between the representatives of the parties in Saudi Arabia, the contract was made in London.

The defendants on the other hand contended that the Telex and oral exchanges in Saudi Arabia constituted a binding contract made there.

The judge considered that the defendants' arguments were cogent but concluded on balance that the plaintiffs had a good arguable case that the contract was made in England. His Lordship agreed.

The defendants further contended that even if the contract was technically made in London there was no jurisdiction unless the case was not only within the letter but also within the spirit of Order 11, rule 1.

His Lordship did not accept that. It was clear that there was jurisdiction provided that the case fell within the letter of one of the paragraphs, if, however, the case, albeit within the letter of one of the sub-paragraphs, was not within the spirit of the rule it would be a powerful, if not conclusive, reason for refusing to exercise jurisdiction in favour of the plaintiffs.

The parties had advanced cogent arguments respectively for the proper law being on the one hand English, and on the other hand Saudi Arabian law. With respect to the judge's decision as to proper law was not, in his Lordship's view, a

matter which arose on an application such as the present. The question was whether the plaintiffs had a good arguable case that English law was the proper law. If they had, then there was jurisdiction to give leave. It might well be that there was also a good arguable case for some other law being the proper law and that if the action went forward that case would prevail at the trial.

That was not to the point, at all events, unless it was clear that the question of proper law could not be further illuminated at the trial. In the present case it clearly could. His Lordship was satisfied that the plaintiffs made out a good arguable case for English law.

Although the court would hesitate to interfere with the judge's discretion, the defendants had radically changed since the judge exercised his discretion in the present case. It was plain from both his judgment and the formal order that he was concerned that the action should not be finally terminated unless and until the Saudi Arabian courts had accepted jurisdiction and the defendants had submitted to such jurisdiction.

Such courts had not done so and although the defendants had signed a deed of submission to the jurisdiction of such courts five days after the judge's judgment, they wrote a letter which was a clear admission that they were of the two places contended for before the court, the forum in which the case could be suitably tried for the interests of all parties and for the ends of justice.

It had a specialist court and specialist lawyers which it was common ground Saudi Arabia had not.

His Lordship had no doubt that it was a proper case for giving leave and would allow the appeal, set aside the judge's order and allow the action to proceed.

Lord Justice Bingham delivered a concurring judgment. Solicitors: Clifford-Turner, Baker & McKenzie.

Minister perverse over TV licence

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Kirklees Borough Council

The Home Secretary's refusal to issue television broadcast receiving licences at the concessionary rate of 5p in respect of retired persons of pensionable age in accommodation for residential care, as defined in paragraph 1(b) of Schedule 2 to the Wireless Telegraphy (Broadcast Licence Charges and Exemption) Regulations (SI 1984 No 1053) and which was provided by a local authority under Part V of the Housing Act

1957, on the basis that the authority's provision of a housing steward, responsible for the welfare of the occupants of the accommodation, had to be a facility exclusive to such persons, was unreasonable and perverse.

Mr Justice Taylor so held in the Queen's Bench Division on January 23 when he allowed the local authority's application for an order of certiorari to quash the secretary of state's refusal, by letter dated February 18, 1985, not to issue the television licences at the concessionary rate in respect of Nos 7, 29 and

33 Roman Close, The Mount, Huddersfield.

MR JUSTICE TAYLOR said the words of Schedule 2 were directed to the facilities in fact provided for such persons and for the common use of all the occupants of the dwellings. There was nothing to suggest that the facility had to be exclusive.

The secretary of state's conclusion that the primary function of the housing steward was the management of the local authority's whole housing stock had no essential basis in fact, even if there was nothing to say in Schedule 2 whether the primary role was of importance.

Cash trial battle bet

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SUNDAY

CHOICE

Son, A. Aerial in six parts
by John Fletcher (4) (8)
9.30 Press Bar
Gordon Clough talks to
Andrea Wharmt-Smith of the
Independent.
9.55 Weather; Travel
10.00 News; German Election
Special from Bonn.
11.00 Sunday Faith: The Case
Against Christ. The Rev
John Young examines
reasons for belief in God.
11.15 In Committee. A weekly
look at the work of
Parliament's select
committees.
12.00 Weather 12.30 Shipping
VHF (available in England and
S Wales only) as above
except: 5.55-6.00am Weather;
Travel 7.10-7.55 Open
Travel: 7.10 Living with
terrorism: Values 7.30
Open to Open: Completing the
course 7.50 Music
Interlude 1.55-2.00pm
Programme News 4.00-
6.00 Editions 4.00 On the Cut.
Six programmes: recalling
life and work on the English
canals 4.30 Not So Long
Ago. 4: The Algerian War 5.00
Dance Express! A
semi-staged German course
(4) 5.30 Buongiorno Italia!
(14)
Radio 3: 1251kHz/247m: VHF-90-
VHF95.8; BBC Radio London:

Regional TV: on facing page

SPORT

Confusion reigns as Liverpool reject Statham

By Steve Bates and Dennis Shaw

Derek Statham's £250,000 transfer from West Bromwich Albion to Liverpool fell through last night amid confusion surrounding the player's fitness.

Snapped up in midweek as replacement to Jim Beglin, Liverpool's Republic of Ireland full back who broke a leg in Wednesday's Littlewoods Cup semi-final victory over Everton, Statham was expected to make his debut today at home to Newcastle United.

After agreeing terms with both the player and his second division club, the League champions were set to complete the signing yesterday subject to the formality of a medical. But a day of activity ended in the 27-year-old former England player leaving Anfield without a contract.

With an agitated Statham by his side, Kenny Dalglish, the Liverpool manager, said: "We've still not finalized negotiations with West Brom, so obviously he cannot play at the moment. We are still negotiating with them and that's all I can say."

But Andy Williamson, a League spokesman, confirmed

the deal was off. He said: "We have been notified by Liverpool that they are not proceeding with the transfer on medical grounds. The forms are being returned to Anfield." Although the League had accepted Statham's registration, Williamson said: "We have the 48 hours rule so that formalities, including a player's medical examination, can be completed. We hold all transfer registrations until we have received confirmation that the buying club is happy. Unfortunately, on this occasion, that is not the case."

More football, page 40

Since an Achilles tendon operation in the summer, Statham — who described the proposed transfer as a "dream move... a chance to win some medals" — has played only twice in the first team, out of position in midfield. He was recalled for the 1-1 draw with Sheffield United at Bramall Lane on January 3 and judged himself "95 per cent match fit". He then played in a shock cup defeat at Swansea and showed no adverse reaction from his injury.

Despite yesterday's about-turn Ron Saunders, Albion's manager, has not given up hope that the deal will go through. He said: "Negotiations are at a very delicate stage. I have spoken to Statham on the telephone. He will not play for Liverpool tomorrow, nor will he play for us. He's very mixed up and tells me his mental attitude would not be right and I agree."

The ball is now in Albion's court. They are likely to suggest a reduced fee or a payment scheme based on instalments as Statham progressively proves his fitness.

Statham is the second Albion player to have suffered a shock rejection on medical grounds. In November 1971, Don Revie, then manager of Leeds United, agreed to pay £155,000 for Asa Hartford — but hours before Hartford was to have made his debut, the Elland Road club withdrew. It later transpired that Hartford had a minute hole in his heart, but after rigorous hospital checks was given the go-ahead to resume his career with Albion.

Howe has a berth at Bristol

The England coach Don Howe, the former Arsenal manager, is joining Bristol Rovers on a part-time basis and will work with the third division club's players when not required by England.

The news will come as a relief to England's manager Bobby Robson, who recently failed to persuade the Football Association to appoint Howe as his full-time assistant. Robson feared that decision would force Howe to look abroad for work.

The Rovers' manager, Bobby Gould, who was a player under Howe at Highbury 18 years ago, said: "It's rather like finding Miss World is free and asking for a date."

*Fourth division Aldershot, who charged a record price of £9 for a place on the terrace for their recent win against Oxford in the third round of the FA Cup, have almost halved the prices for their fourth round match against Barnsley or Caernarfon.

It will now cost £5 to stand or £6.50 to sit for the tie scheduled for January 31. Children and pensioners will be charged £3 to stand and £4.50 for seats.

Colin Hancock, the club chairman, said: "We will not charge such high prices, partly because we expect a larger capacity and also because neither club is in the first division."

Former favourite threatens old pals

By Clive White

David Pleat must feel like the runner-up in football's version of the Krypton Factor every time he casts an envious glance across north London in the direction of Arsenal. While George Graham can afford to stand back and admire very nearly the finished article, Pleat is still fiddling with the pieces.

"People ask me, if I can see a pattern in the Tottenham team, but the bits of the jigsaw don't even fit yet," Pleat said. "Sections of the team have still to be sorted out and I've got new faces who have yet to get acquainted with the players around them."

In fairness to Pleat, Graham had a head start. Nine of the 12 whom Pleat led Luton Town to victory against in an FA Cup fifth round replay last season are fixtures in Graham's team. "Nicholas looked as if he didn't want to know. Hayes was awful and Quinn looked like a fish out of water. The only difference is they've got a different attitude now, which is down to George. But the unit was already conceived."

Pleat applauded Graham for sticking to his guns when they went through their only indifferent period of the season back in September, drawing three and losing one of four league games. "If anything he's been spoilt for lack of choice," Meanwhile

Pleat, whose side will face Arsenal in the Littlewoods Cup semi-finals if they overcome West Ham United, has made wholesale changes. "Our progress has been purely out of moving players in and out of the team."

Pleat sees this weekend as a significant one in the championship. "Manchester United are still a tough proposition at home. A good result for Arsenal will give notice of their intent. But I expect Everton to be steaming after the midweek defeat. You cannot dismiss the Merseyside clubs while they are prepared to spend the way they have recently. They have the gate receipts to generate big signings. I remember visiting Everton three seasons ago when I was at Luton and they had a crowd of 13,000. Since then they've averaged 40,000 gates."

One of the chief threats to Arsenal's leadership and unbeaten run of 22 games is posed by Frank Stapleton, a Highbury favourite for many years before joining United six years ago. For the assault on Arsenal's record he will be joined in the United attack by Terry Gibson, who will be starting in his first home league game since his arrival from Coventry City a year ago. Davenport, whose form has deteriorated recently, is likely to be the odd man out.

Alex Ferguson, United's manager, said: "Arsenal's big test will come if they are beaten." Graham, who like Stapleton left Arsenal as a player to join United, gave an indication that he is prepared to hang on to whatever it is he holds at Old Trafford by bringing in Caesar, a defender, in place of the creative Eric.

The progress of their great rivals, Tottenham, faces its most testing seven days of the season, starting today against Aston Villa. "We need to win tomorrow to retain an interest in the league as well as making progress in the cup competitions against West Ham on Tuesday and Crystal Palace next Saturday," Pleat said.

London clubs set to make move for Hill

Ricky Hill, the former England midfielder player, is likely to attract the attention of at least two London clubs after rejecting a new contract with Luton. The skilful 27-year-old, has turned down a two-year agreement in the hope of securing a transfer to a big-city club.

He may well get his wish, as Tottenham are desperate for a replacement for Glenn Hoddle, their midfield player, who wants a move abroad at the end of the season. Chelsea, also seem likely to join the chase, as Hill nearly signed for them two years ago.

Hill said: "It would be sad to leave Luton, as they are a nice club but after 12 years I feel it's time to give my career a boost."

One Luton player who did move yesterday was Ricky McEvoy who joined Chesterfield in one of four loan transfers involving first division sides. The others saw Terry Howard, the Chelsea full back, sign for Chester, Phil Priest, the Chelsea midfielder, go to Blackpool and Paul McMenery, the West Ham forward, join Northampton Town.

Brown best European with a 68

From John Ballantine, Phoenix

Ken Brown holed a 15-foot birdie putt on the last green for a 68 close to the end of a long and slow opening day in the Phoenix Open.

The Scot's fine card was the result of a typically dogged performance and it was the best of those of the four Europeans competing. Sandy Lyle scored 71 while Bernhard Langer and Philip Parkin both had 73s. These scores were all well behind Mark O'Meara's remarkable leading 63 while Brad Faxon was on 64 and Corey Pavin and Bobby Clampett were among a group on 65.

A two-hour delay through frost prevented 44 players from finishing their rounds and more frost caused more delay and frustration yesterday. When the organisers switched the event this year from its traditional downtown location to a spot 30 miles out in the desert beyond Scottsdale they took a big risk with the winter weather.

Once they had tied away, the leading professionals made hay while the sun raised the noon temperature to 70 degrees. O'Meara's early 63, which contained one eagle and six birdies, remained unsurpassed although Faxon, a 25-year-old New Jersey professional who now lives in Orlando, went close.

Lyle went reasonably well until he took four strokes to get out of two bunkers, while Parkin, playing in his first tournament, twice took three putts. The young Welshman plans to play in 12 US events before returning to start his European campaign in early May.

LEADING SCORES: 63, M O'Meara; 64, B Faxon; 65, C Pavin, B Clampett, E Fion, S Jones; 66, R Madsen; 67, E Fion, H Sutton, F Zetter, A Best; 68, K Brown. Other European scores: 71, S Lyle; 73, B Langer, P Parkin.

Boycott threat

New Delhi (AFP) — Six Arab nations have threatened to boycott the 39th world table tennis championships here next month if Israel participates yesterday. "We are confident India will not allow Israel to compete but there will be an Arab boycott if it happens," Hagar Kashif Badri, chief of the League of Arab States mission here, said.

Sixty-five nations have confirmed their participation in the championships which begin on February 18. "India as a host country can say no to Israel and we believe it will say no," Mrs Badri said.

Athenians back

The Athenian League, which ceased to function as a football competition three years ago, confirmed yesterday that it would be revived next season. In a brief statement, the league said it was doing so "at the request of clubs." The Vauxhall-Opel League, which may lose some clubs to the revived league, has complained to the Football Association.

Hahnenkamm is tamed by Bell but demolishes Brooker

From David Miller, Kitzbühel, Austria

Ever since the Olympic Games in Munich and those damned Israeli hostages, the chattering sound of a helicopter has sent a shiver down my spine, an intimation of disaster: the chopper blades were whirling over the Hahnenkamm here yesterday morning. The spectator appeal of downhill skiing, with its breakneck speeds, has much of the morbid fascination of motor racing.

Todd Brooker, the smiling 26-year-old Canadian racer, was on his final training run, one place before Martin Bell of Britain, for today's race on this formidable course where Brooker won in 1983. A few hundred yards from the bottom, hurtling towards the finishing line at around 75mph, Brooker suffered a fall so appalling that for hundreds of spectators their hearts momentarily stood still.

As Brooker was catapulted nearly 100 yards until he lay motionless against a safety fence, having somersaulted four times like a broken wagon wheel, twice bouncing on his head, we all wondered how he could still be alive. Those who follow this iron sport of nerveless athletes say they have never seen such a frightening accident.

Mercifully, a rescuer having been winched down to lift Brooker's semi-conscious crumpled body away to the local hospital, it was learned that he had sustained nothing worse than concussion, a broken nose, lacerations of the face and torn ligaments of the left knee. There may be few physical challenges remaining in modern life, but one of them is here in the Alps.

The almost romantic duel with fear reaches a zenith on the Hahnenkamm. For the first time ever, the leading racers are breaking a time of two minutes for the three and a half kilometre course with its vertical drop of over 2,600 feet. Bell, a commendable

tenth on yesterday's training run, was only 0.11 secs over the two minutes. Peter Müller and Pirmin Zurbriggen, the two Swiss who have headed the timings for the past two days, have been nudging 1:59 — and yesterday Müller got underneath that by four hundredths of a second.

The two of them are quoted jointly at 3-to-1 in the betting for today, with Wasmeier (West Germany) and Alpiger (Switzerland) on fives, half a dozen others on sixes, and Bell priced at 15. It is a good price: he could surprise a few.

"I'm no longer frightened of the course," he said after yesterday's run. "It's incredibly steep and icy, very technical because of the tight turns, and hairy because there's no room for manoeuvre. If you misjudge anything, you don't merely lose time, you're off the course."

Practice times

Downhill: 1, P Müller (Switz), 1min 58.94sec; 2, P Zurbriggen (Switz), 1:59.01; 3, F Heidegger (Ger), 1:59.04; 4, C Alpiger (Switz), 1:59.41; 5, P Heidegger (Switz), 1:59.41; 6, R Resch (Aust), 1:59.70; 7, C Cashman (Switz), 1:59.76; 8, E Wasmeier (Ger), 1:59.95; 9, D Mader (Switz), 1:59.97; 10, M Bell (GB), 2:00.11.

"I'm thrilled that I'm skiing it much better than last year. I know now that I can win at Kitzbühel." He is not saying today, which will be his sixth attempt, but some of the fears have been mastered.

As he came to the Hausberg jump yesterday, some 600 metres from the finish, he caught sight in the corner of his eye of a yellow flag being waved by a steward: the sign to stop because there has been an accident. It was in the fierce depression following this jump that Brooker had got into trouble as he attempted to take the sharp left-hand bend, losing a ski as he tried to negotiate the gate for the subsequent right-hand turn. There was nothing much

he could do, except throttle back, take the last two turns carefully and coast to the line. In such circumstances his time was exceptional.

On the flatter middle section of the course his split time ranked him only 17th, but on the top, and most difficult, part of the run he was fourth fastest. The top, he says, is the key to winning the race. He is at his best on ice, less accomplished on the gliding phases.

After starting the season with such promise as Val D'Isère, he then had the misfortune to break his finest ski in a heavy jump at Val Gardena when lying sixth in training, and finished 22nd. Continued problems with his ski, and indifferent runs at Garmisch-Partenkirchen and then Wengen ended with him going for special testing under the supervision of Fischer, who supply his skis.

They discovered, apart from any problem with their own product, that Bell was positioning himself incorrectly, and a correction to that has improved his gliding performance. He is now skiing maybe better than at any time in his career, and a prominent performance today would provide a fine psychological boost for the world championships starting next week at Crans Montana.

The sponsor's pennant hanging outside the British hotel here is unintentionally accurate. "Bell's British Ski Team" it says. With Nigel Smith having had to return home after a fall on Wednesday, and with Graham Bell and Ronnie Duncan in France attempting to pick up FIS points in other races, Martin is here on his own. It is remarkable that as the starters go to the line this morning there are eight Austrians ranked behind Bell on training times and only one, Erwin Resch, in front of him.

RUGBY UNION NIFC hoping for points at Gibson Park

It is decision day in section one of the Ulster Senior League with Ballymena and Instonians, both unbeaten, clashing at Shane Park. And at the other end of the scale NIFC, without any points, face a formidable task against Malone at Gibson Park (George Ace writes).

The all-round strength of Ballymena and the match-winning qualities of Ringland, on the right wing, will be put to the test against Instonians. League points appear to act as a spur to the side and with Ringland's Irish colleague, Crossan, in direct opposition, aided and abetted by David Irwin.

NIFC welcome back at centre, Robert Kururangi, the Maori All Black, and Stephen Snoddy, at scrum half. Kururangi's experience and thrust in the three-quarter line will be a decided asset to a side desperately looking for points. Ulster Senior Cup draw: First round: (Feb 28) — (1) Portlaoine v Dungannon; (2) NIFC v Ballymena; (3) City of Derry v Coleraine v Ballymacninch; (4) Coleraine v Ards; (5) NIFC v Ballymacninch; (6) Instonians v Malone; (7) Academy v Benger; (8) Armagh v CRYMS. Second round: (March 14) — (9) winners 1 v winners 2 (10) 3 v 4, (11) 5 v 6, (12) 7 v 8. Semi-finals: (March 28) — winners 1 v winners 11, 12 v 12. Final: Saturday, April 11.

The boy with top woman to beat

By Colin McQuillan

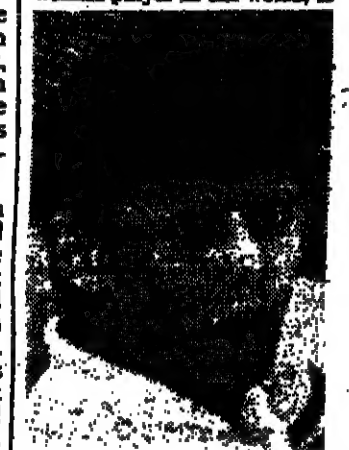
The perennial argument over male and female parity in sport takes on yet another dimension next month when Susan Devoy, the women's world squash champion, takes up the challenge of a 14-year-old Yorkshire schoolboy, Simon Parke, for a winner-takes-all £2,000 purse.

Miss Devoy, aged 23, from Rotoman in New Zealand, has just returned to her English base at the Oasis Club in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, to prepare for the European season and the April defence of her British Open title. She was married just before Christmas, to John Oakley, her trainer, and has been concentrating her training off court through the past two months.

Her challenger is no ordinary schoolboy. From his home base at Postlebracket, Parke has dominated every British Open age group championship from 10 to 16.

More pertinently, last summer, Parke defeated Lisa Opie, the British national champion, five times out of five in a travelling challenge series around Yorkshire. "I enjoyed the matches against Lisa," he said. "She was a little slow but her racket skills were as good as any man's. They were all good games and at times could have gone either way. I learned quite a bit and no doubt will do the same against Susan who is obviously a tremendous player."

But Parke's coach and squash mentor, Malcolm Willstrop, frowned upon that series and is not sure that the challenge offers much genuine sporting prospect. He said: "These things do the game no good. Susan is a very good player in a usually even, but very little chance even for Susan, who is far and away the best woman player in the world, to



Parke: schoolboy prodigy survive against Simon if he is playing reasonably well.

Miss Devoy herself is pessimistic of the outcome. "I played Glen Wilson, the best junior in New Zealand, and he slaughtered me," she noted. "I play men all the time in the leagues back home and I play for the Oasis men's first team. I can deal with their strength and power, but their speed around the court is just too much. They get to everything."

Parke is already some levels ahead of Wilson. He plays regularly in the same Harrogate team as Bryan Beeson, the British champion, in the Yorkshire premier league, the strongest county league in the country. He is already on the books at Chapel Allerton club in Leeds for national league action.

The challenge against the women's world champion grew on an exhibition Parke put on at the Oasis against Stacy Ross, the brilliant young prospect from Surrey, before the 1986 under-23 final at Marlow.

Club members who have virtually adopted Miss Devoy for the European half of each working year since she first won the British Open in 1984 agreed to raise £1,000 on her behalf when it was suggested the Yorkshire boy could beat her. Willstrop will arrive at Marlow with the £1,000 to back his boy.

Bryce Taylor, who is squash director at the Oasis and the man who coached Miss Devoy to her early successes, is a famed betting man. He was quick to set up the planning which led inevitably to the challenge match at Marlow on February 13.

"I know Susan's capability and I am sure she can beat the boy I watched last year," Taylor said. "It is one of the great debates of squash, whether a top woman can compete against even a quality club man. This is a perfect way to test the various viewpoints and enjoy risking a few pounds on the outcome."

Miss Devoy knows all about Taylor's gambling instincts and is quite willing to take on the youngster on a day she thinks could be lucky for either player. "On balance I would rather have played this match at the end of the European season when my matchplay will be sharper, but I am happy to strike a blow for the women's game. It is all part of professional life. A life plan to be living for several years to come."

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